Chronicles

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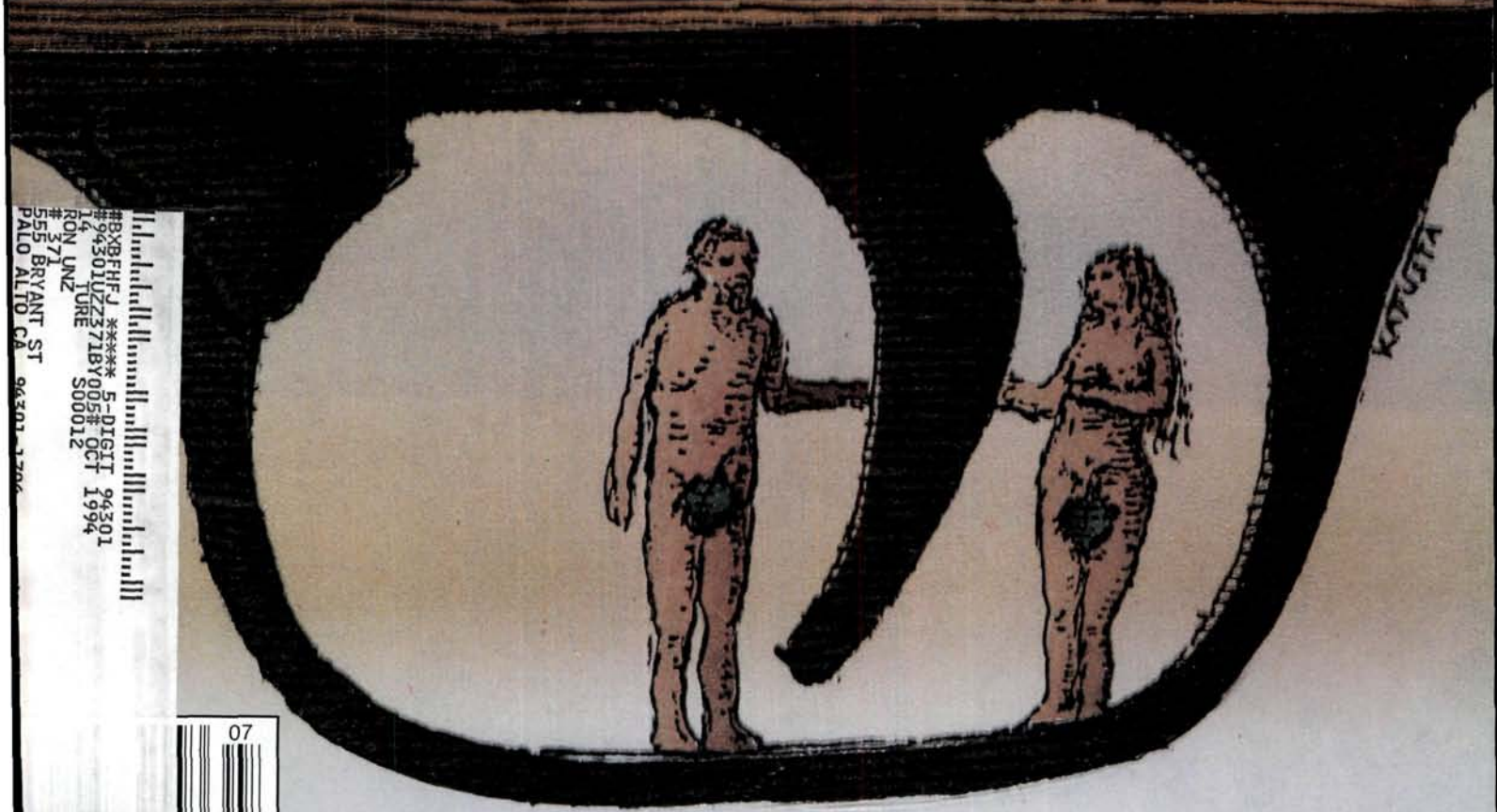

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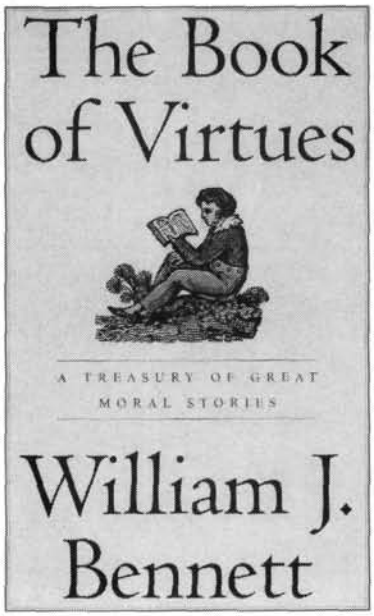

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PERSPECTIVE

In Praise of Sex and Violence 10
by Thomas Fleming

The stuff of real life.

VIEWS

Anarcho-Tyranny, U.S.A. by Samuel Francis 14

Why seat belt law violators can't be tolerated.

The Puritanism That Dare Not Speak Its Name 20
by Philip Jenkins

When teetotalers reign.

Yahoo Justice by Sarah J. McCarthy 24

Stifling and sanitizing Jane and John Doe.

OPINIONS

The Rise of the Red-Browns 28
by Wayne Allensworth
Vladimir Zhirinovsky: *The Last Drive to the South.*

The autobiography of our latest Hitler.

REVIEWS

Stephan Lesher depicts a real man of courage 31
in *George Wallace: American Populist*, writes **Clyde Wilson** ◆ **Harold O.J. Brown** praises *The Wrath of Nations: Civilizations and the Furies of Nationalism* by William Pfaff ◆ William Langewiesche's *Cutting for Sign* deals with that "third nation" at the American-Mexican border, explains **Gregory McNamee** ◆ Edmund Wilson's final volume *The Sixties: The Last Journal, 1960-1972* is disappointing, reports **Chilton Williamson, Jr.** ◆ William Chafe depicts a strange peripatetic in *Never Stop Running: Allard Lowenstein and the Struggle to Save American Liberalism*, says **John C. Chalberg** ◆

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Australia: Australians All, Let Ostriches 36
by R.J. Stove

Letter From the Marine Corps: Personal Moral Values 39
by Christopher Check

VITAL SIGNS

The Divine Left vs. the New Right 41
by Tomislav Sunic

Park Ranger Colombo: The Vince Foster Affair 43
by E. Christian Kopff

Perception and Truth: The Tailhook Debacle 44
by Robert C. Whitten

The Crusade to Nowhere: Remembering E.P. Thompson 46
by George Watson

DEPARTMENTS

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES 4

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS 4

THE HUNDREDTH MERIDIAN 49
The Violent West
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

POETRY
Hope 19
by Laurance Wieder

Sardines 22
by John Nixon, Jr.

Moe Howard Considers the Death of His Brother, Curly 25
by Jim Henley

ON THE COVER

Cover drawing by Janusz Kapusta.

JULY 1994/3

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On *Chronicles* and Immigration

I'm a liberal, environmentalist, feminist dove, a businessman, a Democrat. I read your magazine because some of it is thoughtful, educated, and intelligent. By comparison, *National Review* is full of sophomoric Hillary/Bill/Teddy Kennedy/Democrat-bashing—fun partisan stuff if one thinks that wink-wink allusions to Gennifer Flowers are high humor or enjoys pep-rally editorials that say "any Democrat who says he cares about the Constitution will lie about anything."

From time to time *Chronicles* slips into sneering and partisanship—but mostly you have been a notch or two more intellectual. Your thoughts on immigration are more thoughtful than demagogic, and so I'll pass along my own perspective.

My background is what most of my fellow Rotarians here in Medford, Oregon, think of as "normal" American: mixed European and Protestant. My wife, Debra Fee Jing Lee, was born in China and immigrated here. Some would call her Chinese, though I think of her as American. I'm not altogether sure what the census people make of our son Dillon, but I do know that he causes some people to be concerned about the watering down of the "normal" American race. I don't see it that way. Dillon is my son, my blood. He is not a diminution of me or America. Dillon is an expansion, a reaching out to my immortality and America's. American culture will flourish now and into the future not by how well it is defended, but by how well it is grown and shared.

—Peter Sage
Medford, OR

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

IN SOUTH AFRICA the negotiations between F.W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela and the subsequent election of the latter as president had an unexpected and wholly unknown prelude. In 1969, I was teaching at South Africa's University of Potchefstroom, the very center of Afrikaner conservative forces. I was the only non-Boer professor in a Boer environment, the only Catholic among Calvinists, in the heart of the Transvaal. One morning a call came from a colleague whom I had not met: the Reverend Willem de Klerk, just back from a study tour of England and the Netherlands, the two countries that have shaped the Afrikaners' intellectual horizon. *This* de Klerk was the elder brother of *that* de Klerk who became president of his country (or of what remains of it). The reverend, in his 40's at the time, wished to meet me. We met in his office at 2 P.M. and ended our conversation about five hours later—or rather we continued the following day via intra-faculty memos.

We disagreed from beginning to end. Willem de Klerk knew I was familiar with the local situation and perhaps wished to try out his theory on me. He favored a policy of racial integration and listed more or less the same reasons that Helen Sussman had given me some six years before: the racial tension was intolerable; facing a black majority, whites could not expect to hold on indefinitely to power; it was better to negotiate while power was in the white man's hands so he did not slip into war like the French in Algeria, an event still recent at the time. To these arguments, Willem added the religious one: we are all God's children.

It was not difficult to diagnose an acute case of puritanical bad conscience. I replied that a bad conscience may be a bad advisor in determining a nation's policy and pointed at my interlocutor's naiveté in expecting a peaceful solution instead of a multiple race war: first between black and black (Zulu and Xhosa, politically Inkatha and ANC), then between other races, finally with whites caught in the vortex of destruction. What should we do, then?—he asked. A mixture of firmness and reforms, but keep at all times the initiative and the political power, I answered. This was the only "solution," not only in view of the ethnic proportion of the total population but also in view of the penetration

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among Afrikaners of liberal Anglophile ideas. Maybe the reverend himself was unaware of the fact that his own ethnic group was ready to make the greatest concessions.

Indeed, a few days later the issue was brought home to me. On a visit to Senator de Klerk's house (the father of Willem and Frederick), I met in the senator's person the old-time, quasi-Roman, Boer farmer-gentleman: not a trace of the liberal persuasion found in his two sons, products of the new, urban South Africa. Had he lived, things may have turned out differently.

It was the Reverend Willem who was polarizing white attitudes into *verligte* (liberal) and *verkrampte* (conservative). No wonder his influence was decisive on his younger brother and the latter's academic advisors. Not surprisingly, the gist of our debate was lost on my Potchefstroom colleague. True, the black majority was in dire need of wide-sweeping reforms, but it was equally true that a policy of abrupt concessions would (does) end in anarchy, similar to developments farther north, in Zaire, Uganda, Nigeria. In South Africa, a well-functioning regime has chosen to surrender, in preference to a gradual ascension of a black elite to power. The naive enthusiasm for "power-sharing" outlined in Willem de Klerk's memoranda has opened on race war and misery. Elections may merely be a fig leaf for chaos.

—*Thomas Molnar*

ONLY LUCKY STRIKES and a pitcher of Tanqueray martinis could resolve the cognitive dissonances of the Clinton administration. One newspaper I saw on March 25 carried a story about hearings on regulating tobacco alongside another story about Dr. Jocelyn Elders' *opposition* to banning tobacco products. Since then FDA Commissioner Dr. David Kessler has been ranting before Congress about the evils of tobacco, insisting that tobacco is a drug and should be treated like one. Meanwhile, the Whitewater affair has been unfolding, the most alarming aspect of which seems the somnolent: Bill Clinton's aw-shucks press conference and poker-faced twaddle about his wife's "moral authority." Mr. Clinton has also appeared at ball games and gone on record in favor of health. Clinton is most dangerous when he affects the most stupidity, a trick of Southern politicians that the national press just doesn't get. Ah, but what is the connection between tobacco and moral authority? The answer is power.

Deeply moved by Mr. Clinton's recent televised intimacies about prayer and spirituality, I nevertheless noted during one of my brief periods of lucidity the discordance between his tone and his policies. The one thing I keep remembering is Bill Clinton's promise to give us a government that looks more like the American people—and I wish he had. The American people, as far as I know them, not only look a lot better than the Clinton administration but also have a rate of sexual deviancy of a mere one percent. The "Clintones" are people (some of whom have no need of political cartoonists, resembling in one case a turkey vulture with wattles, in another a Boston bull terrier, and so on) whose answer to every "problem" is—more power for the federal government.

And person, do we have problems, tobacco chief among them. Because it is not against perversion but has to be against something, the Clinton administration is apparently against tobacco. On the other hand, the Surgeon General favors the legalization of drugs as well as condoms for high school students, homosexual adoption, etc. Obviously, the Clinton administration itself is one of the biggest reasons that people need smoking's consolation. Besides, smoking is both traditional and modern, American and multicultural. Professor Richard Klein's *Cigarettes Are Sublime* pretty much says it all on that score. But why is it that so often with the Clinton administration, instead of walking a mile for a Camel, we feel that we have walked a mile behind one? The bliss of pulmonary eroticism has never seemed so attractive as when assailed by the blue noses and blue stockings of this government. Just looking at them is enough to make you sound off for Chesterfields. And besides, the New Puritanism, even Prohibitionism, comes from a source that must seem—to say the least—unlikely, yet whose perversity and lust for power make such grotesque ingenuousness and inversion necessary and even predictable.

Liberalism as twisted Puritanism and as a means to power is a familiar story in American history. How pleasant it is to think that women crusading against alcohol helped finance the Mob, albeit indirectly. But perhaps a more perfect image is of the confrontation at Waco, Texas. You may recall how tenderly Attorney General Janet Reno agonized about all those abused children before she sent a tank after them.

But while we're on the subject of temperance, I interrupt this message with a few words in praise of alcohol. There's nothing like the sight of Janet Reno making war on American citizens and killing them on principle, or of Jocelyn Elders running her mouth about condoms for children and the joys of sodomy, or of Bill Clinton getting close to God and closer to some bimbo, or of Hillary Clinton trying to look as though cattle futures wouldn't melt in her mouth, or of Warren Christopher groping in his briefcase for a foreign policy, or of Donna Shalala trying to look and sound normal—nothing, I say, that would make anyone want to duck faster into some discreet cocktail lounge for a quick one. Let's face it: when the title "Surgeon General" has come to signify something more like "Obnoxious Moron," then there's much to be said for getting loaded.

And not only that. Since we now pay billions to be told what everyone used to know, I must have been the only person in the world listening 40 years ago when I was instructed by every adult I knew that smoking and drinking were bad habits that would shorten my life. And sometimes I hope they have, because I don't much want to live in a country that would tolerate being told such boring truisms by overpaid federal phonies. In that sense, the noble mien of Dr. Jocelyn Elders not only makes a smoke-filled bar newly appealing but also reminds me that in the cemetery I will be hanging out with a higher class of people than the political class that governs this nation. I find death assurance much more comforting than life insurance.

Why worry about the Clintones trying to take over a seventh of the economy—the health care system? They're only interested in it for *our own good*. Singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" and throwing out the first pitch, Billary is as American as a three-dollar bill. Lyndon Johnson would—and did—approve of decking out naked power grabs with boughs of holly and sentimentality and lies. He would have understood how completely unembarrassed the Clintones have been by the rebukes of Mother Teresa and the Pope, as they proceed to lock "reproductive services" into their

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health care reform. And I think he would also have approved of Dr. Elders' obsession with condoms. Latex is a solution to lust as much as Band-Aids are to Kaposi's sarcoma, or as "war" was to "poverty." Variously perverted constituencies of the Clintons wouldn't have it any other way.

Meanwhile, *à votre santé*. Got a light?

—J.O. Tate

CIGARETTE SMOKING is bad for your health. But so are automobiles, candy bars, fast food, martinis, television, and even sunshine. Since the days of James V and I, we have heard about the dangers of tobacco. So why all the fuss surrounding the cigarette industry this spring?

Even more absurd than Representative Henry A. Waxman's House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment, which felt the need to hold hearings to determine whether nicotine should be regulated by the Food and Drug Administration as an addictive drug, was National Public Radio, which fueled the hysteria with an interminable string of special reports on both the industry and the campaign against it. While Representative Waxman was bold in asserting that tobacco companies have altered nicotine levels in cigarettes to hook smokers, NPR was downright belligerent in reporting that 13 of the additives to cigarettes have not received federal approval and are therefore hazardous.

This last allegation, which prompted the six largest tobacco companies to release publicly a list of 599 ingredients found in various combinations in their brands of cigarettes, triggered one of the worst battles in the antismoking war so far. Having already denounced the evils of tar and nicotine, critics of the industry could now talk about the potential dangers of inhaling additives like methyl salicylate (which causes birth defects in hamsters), caramel color (which produces catechol, a co-carcinogen, when heated), and licorice root (a flavorant and moistener containing glycyrrhizic acid, which produces carcinogens when burned). An advertisement run in major newspapers by Philip Morris on the day before the subcommittee hearings assured consumers that all of the additives on the list are common foods or have been approved by federal agencies, but skeptics (rightly) argued that this does not necessarily make them safe. Angelica root extract was on the list, for example, and has been approved by the FDA for use in chewing gum, baked goods, and beverages, but it has also caused cancer in laboratory animals.

As a result of the publication of the list (to which the Department of Health and Human Services has had access since 1984), both the government and the media have professed indignation at cigarette companies for misleading and manipulating the American consumer. Yet the above example demonstrates that in blackballing this one industry they have missed the real scandal: potentially dangerous additives like angelica root are common in processed food products, which are ingested even by *non*smokers on a daily basis. Moreover, few people in positions of power have voiced concern over chemically-altered ingredients in food. While all branches of the federal government have become involved in the battle with the tobacco industry, there were no congressional hearings or Surgeon General reports when court cases around the country revealed the "clandestine production and sale of adulterated fruit juice" to be a "widespread and highly profitable practice . . . that is costing American consumers an estimated $1.2 billion a year and exposing them to undisclosed and unapproved chemicals" (as the *New York Times* reported last October). And the artificial sweetener aspartame, which some scientists believe was released onto the American market without adequate testing, continues to receive government approval, despite the fact that it accounts for 80 percent of all complaints to the FDA's Adverse Reaction Monitoring System.

In short, Representative Waxman is hypocritical in cracking down on tobacco companies for practices that the government overlooks—or even approves—in manufacturers of other consumable products. When the chairman of the House's health subcommittee argues that these companies should be held to the "same strict standards" as makers of aspirin and soda, he is ignoring the fact that Tylenol and Coca-Cola are no less guilty of manipulating consumers in their own way than Philip Morris and R.J. Reynolds. Americans are addicted to junk—to salt, sugar, caffeine, texturizers, moisteners, and flavorants—and junk is what most of their manufacturers happily provide to them.

Waxman accuses tobacco company executives of "lacking corporate responsibility," but the publication by these executives of a list of ingredients that are FDA-approved raises questions about the corporate responsibility of the federal agency whose duty it is to protect the health of consumers. One other recent news item shows that the FDA is not above the manipulation of consumers it so loudly condemns in other organizations. According to the *New York Times* on April 18, the FDA may have collaborated with the manufacturer of a genetically engineered bovine growth hormone in clearing the drug for sale. Three congressmen have asked the General Accounting Office to investigate three top-level FDA officials who were paid by Monsanto, the manufacturer of the new drug, for legal work or scientific studies before joining the government; all three subsequently helped to develop the FDA's formal opinion that the drug is safe, that it should be approved, and that labeling dairy products from herds that have been treated with it is unnecessary. Cigarette-smoking is a vice engaged in willfully by teenagers and adults; milk, however, is a supposedly nutritious substance given by parents to small children. If the federal government wants to get serious about protecting consumers from corporate irresponsibility, it can start by defending young Americans from threats of its own creation.

—Christine Haynes

ACADEMIC CHARLATANISM these days includes not only defenses of plagiarism and violent campaigns of intimidation against proscribed opinion. These symptoms of the bankruptcy of humanistic learning worry some and find celebration among others. But who on either side of the fault line in the academic humanities can find grounds to defend giving degrees in subjects on which no member of a faculty has professional qualifications or expertise of any kind? And who can exculpate approving doctoral dissertations on literature the original language of which the doctorate's signatories read with difficulty, if at all? You would think accrediting agencies would ask some tough questions. But, busy with their search for sufficient stigmata of cultural diversity on the campus, they lose sight of the more fundamental question of mere charlatanism.

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My case in point involves Claremont Graduate School, where, last spring, the theologians gave a doctoral degree for a dissertation devoted to—of all things—some ideas of mine. Only after the dissertation was accepted and the doctoral degree granted did the young scholar send his work to me for my comments. What I found was that he had completely misrepresented my ideas, which he claimed to criticize. With predictable humility, he announced in his preface that all of my work would have to be redone because of his "discovery." But, alas, his entire dissertation rested on a simple misreading of a book of mine and no reading at all of several dozen others on the same problem. It was a simple mistake that he could have cleared up had he asked me whether he had gotten my point right. He hadn't gotten it at all. But he spent some 400 pages disproving what he (wrongly) thought I'd said. His "teachers" did not notice. But, not knowing the territory, either the primary sources or the scholarship on them, how could they have noticed? Nor did they ask me to read the work while it was in progress, let alone to serve on the dissertation committee (it is common to invite outside experts for just that purpose).

Now, when I considered those who served on the dissertation committee and signed the document as an acceptable contribution to learning, I could not find the name of a single scholar who publishes in the field of the dissertation. Indeed, I doubt that anyone on the dissertation committee could read and accurately explain 30 or 40 consecutive lines of the ancient document that is subject to analysis; as a matter of fact, most of them cannot even read the language in which it is written. But that did not stop the university from collecting tuition nor prevent these scholars from signing their names to the dissertation.

When I wrote to the president, the provost, the dean of the graduate school, and the chairman of the dissertation committee, not one of them even thought it necessary to respond to my letters. One member of the committee, an old friend of mine, wrote to say, "I don't know why you're so mad," as though issues of sentiment intervened. But neither he nor any other academic officer of Claremont Graduate School or its theology faculty possessed enough respect for the just indignation of a colleague even to write back and say, "You're wrong because. . . . The dissertation is sound because. . . ."

Why not? It is because reason has ceased to matter; professors in the humanities no longer conceive that they have to give reasons for what they endorse as a responsible and professional contribution to learning. What I deem to be the charlatanism at play at Claremont disgraces not the young doctoral student—his error was one of mere arrogance—nor even the members of the dissertation committee, who pretentiously passed their opinion about things of which they knew not, for this happens every day in the American academy. But what—other than complete indifference to the integrity of their work—can explain the silence of the college administrators, who obviously don't think they have to answer their mail? If there is academic malpractice, surely this qualifies: *not even to defend the integrity of their own degrees.*

—*Jacob Neusner*

R.I.P. RICHARD NIXON—Few people know that for eight years Richard Nixon presided over the first federal program using the leverage of government contracts to open jobs for minority workers. In 1953, President Eisenhower, acting on the advice of a task force in the Truman administration, issued an Executive Order declaring that all government contractors must not "discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color, or national origin" and that all subcontracts must contain the same provision.

The committee created to implement this pronouncement was chaired by the Vice President. Other members included Attorney General William Rogers, Secretary of Labor James Mitchell, Assistant Secretary of Defense Thomas Pike, George Meany, Walter Reuther, President James Nabrit, Jr., of Howard University, and other government officials and prominent interested citizens. The key staff members were the people who had drawn up the nondiscrimination plan under President Truman. I was employed as executive vice chairman in 1956 and 1957.

The diverse interests of the committee members proved somewhat contentious, but as chairman Richard Nixon gave a fair hearing to every voice and permitted no one to dominate the discussion. Having always done his homework, his leadership was surefooted.

Because the committee's work was fervently opposed in some quarters, I was advised to hire a secretary in whom I had absolute confidence. An associate from Palos Verdes College, where I had been serving, agreed to accept the position. One of her responsibilities was to take minutes of the committee meetings. On her first day in that role, Mr. Nixon arrived after the meeting had begun. He was briefed on the rather difficult matter at hand, and the discussion resumed. He interrupted to say he hadn't met this lady, nodding at my secretary, who was seated at a short distance from the conference table. After I presented her, he thanked her for accepting the job and expressed hope that she would find that her new work justified the complications of moving herself and her son all the way from California.

This was a natural and genuine act of courtesy, typical of the behavior that earned him the respect and support of the staff members, including the Truman appointees, who were lifelong Democrats. In an echo of this kindness, Luci Baines Johnson recently spoke of her gratitude for a note Richard Nixon sent her after the birth of her baby. He said he knew her father would have been delighted that she had named the daughter for his mother. This letter, written shortly before President Nixon resigned, was, she said, "an extraordinary act of thoughtfulness from a man in the midst of a terrible ordeal."

When the Government Contract Committee began its work, prejudice foreclosed a great percentage of nonmenial jobs to minorities. At the end of the Eisenhower administration, a vast change had been wrought. Millions of jobs had been opened to all citizens under the Equal Job Opportunities program headed by Richard Nixon.

It should be noted that Mr. Nixon took no initiative to make sure the public knew of his role in procuring great benefits for minority groups, just as he took no public credit for his decision not to challenge the outcome of the 1960 presidential election, which a number of seasoned observers believed might have been reversed in a recount. In both instances, Richard Nixon was an American citizen serving his country, not a politico seeking a higher rating in the opinion polls. He deserves praise

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and gratitude.

—*John A. Howard*

PRO-FAMILY LOBBYISTS on Capitol Hill had a strong wind in their sails last March: the phrase "H.R. 6" had become a verb, meaning "to unleash a tsunami of angry phone calls, letters, and faxes from concerned citizens." H.R. 6 was a bill to reauthorize (at increased funding levels) the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, a program through which federal dollars—and with them, federal control—are applied to public schools.

The isolated pro-family success that gave rise to phrases like "Do you want us to H.R. 6 you again?" came in response to an initiative by Representative George Miller (D-California). Mr. Miller proposed an amendment, added to H.R. 6 in committee, that would have required school districts receiving ESEA funds (and or almost all do) to certify to the U.S. Department of Education that each and every teacher "under their jurisdiction" was "certified to teach in the subject area to which he or she is assigned."

Just more Beltway boilerplate, it seemed—until the ever-alert Mike Farris, legal champion of homeschoolers (and recently a heroic candidate for lieutenant governor of Virginia), noticed that the operation of the Miller Amendment was not by any means restricted to public school teachers. In many states homeschooling families are required to file curricular notices and testing results with the local school district and are thus "under" its "jurisdiction." Private schools were potentially threatened, too.

Note that the Miller Amendment would not have been satisfied with general certification (which more obnoxious states still require of homeschooling parents): it would have required specific certification in each and every subject taught by any given teacher. This would have been extremely burdensome: most homeschoolers are as adept at teaching as their campus-school counterparts, but there is no guarantee that many of them would be able to jump through certification hoops designed by people who are hostile to homeschooling to begin with. Despite the taped denial that Mr. Miller was later to put on his office telephone in response to thousands of calls, the Miller Amendment was a dagger at the heart of homeschooling and at the principle of local and family autonomy in education.

On the charitable assumption that this problem was a mere drafting oversight, Representative Dick Armey (R-Texas) offered a secondary amendment in committee to specify that private and homeschools were not covered by the certification requirements. It failed—on a party-line vote.

So the Family Research Council, Focus on the Family, Mr. Farris's Home School Legal Defense Association, and other groups shifted into overdrive. In my own years with the Family Research Council, I have personally observed the enormous lobbying energy of the homeschooling community. Friends on the Hill told FRC that the avalanche of calls, letters, and faxes opposing the Miller Amendment surpassed those regarding the NAFTA battle.

When the dust cleared, the Armey Amendment had been added to H.R. 6 by the full House by a vote of 374 to 53. This illustrates good news and bad news about federal lawmaking today. The good news is that highly motivated "communities of virtue" (to borrow a concept from Alasdair MacIntyre and Allan Carlson) can affect legislative outcomes. The bad news is that even when battles such as the one over the Miller and Armey Amendments are won, the war goes on, with the federal government continuing to win out over individuals and families, with the values of the bicoastal elite continuing to displace the values of local communities.

The fact is, without taking anything away from the Armey Amendment, H.R. 6 is still a monster of a bill. It will give $12.4 billion to the present arrogant and failing education establishment; it will give unelected potentates the power to fire elected school boards for failing to meet as-yet unspecified "standards"—standards which, in practice, could very well turn out to be the woolly and politicized ones of the so-called "outcome-based education" (OBE) movement; and it will expand school-based contraceptive clinics, under the latest euphemism, "coordinated community services" (e.g., referring young women to the community abortionist).

The battle to squelch the Miller Amendment by means of the Armey Amendment absolutely had to be fought and won, and it was. But it's a measure of our times that a bill that does all that H.R. 6 will do to public schools is regarded by many in Washington as a victory for the pro-family interest because it refrains at the last minute from doing it to private and homeschools as well.

—*David M. Wagner*

WASHINGTON POST readers are accustomed to pansexual propaganda, from exposés of Middle America's "homophobia" to adoring reviews of feminist plays (as if the five million people in the Washington area were clamoring to squeeze into fetid little theaters to see their values trashed). But even battle-scarred *Post* readers must have winced one day late last winter, when the newspaper's Style section outdid itself.

Smiling at them from the front page is a large closeup of Peri Jude Radecic, the pompadoured leader of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. The lengthy article by Megan Rosenfeld blows dozens of kisses at Radecic, joining her in denouncing the "right," the "religious right," "the right wing," and the usual subject—Jesse Helms—while managing to include every gay cliché (we are "victims," we need to "form our family structures as we choose," gay-bashing has "increased by 172 percent," etc.).

Not one critic of the gay rights movement is quoted. No statistics appear to have been checked or challenged. The article even manages to take a swipe at the video *The Gay Agenda*, one of the few documentaries that accurately portrays the reality of homosexuality. Rosenfeld (the "reporter") slams the video by writing sarcastically that it features "'experts,' who quote unsourced statistics that 'prove' that gay men are more prone to disease . . . that they can be 'reformed' if they choose, that they 'recruit' young boys, and so forth."

Never mind that the quotes are backed by experienced therapists, studies in major medical journals, and the more honest gay authors and journalists. Homosexual activists have not laid so much as a pinkie on *The Gay Agenda*, other than to smear the video's producers as savagely as they know how; they identify them with a "conservative Christian church."

After the page-sized mash note to Radecic, the reader moves along to a column by William F. Powers, where we learn about *Plus Voice*, a new magazine by and for those infected with the HIV virus. Writer Ann Copeland says that one of her goals is "to have the public view HIV with less fear and more calm,

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much as it sees diabetes." Here's a wonder: infectious diabetes! With no sense of irony, the same issue of *Plus Voice* features an interview with Clinton AIDS czarina Kristine Gebbie, who has promoted hysteria all over America via the government's condom ad campaign, which is directed toward everyone except those actually at risk for the disease.

Finally, the article says that the magazine reflects "the appreciative sense of life these people seem to acquire after the bad news sinks in." That genuinely poignant note is followed by a passage that deserves full quotation: "One woman who has been a heroin addict, a prostitute, and homeless—and that's just a sample—says she wasn't happy with herself or her life until she learned she had the disease. And William Franklin delivers an impish squib on the joys of using one's infection as an excuse for avoiding mundane social chores: 'Suddenly you see Aunt Sophie—and that entire species of relatives/co-workers/old acquaintances from high school—in a new refreshingly distant light. Very distant. Like from another galaxy. The word "no," as in "No thanks. I won't be attending your brain-dead gathering this year," now trips off the tongue like never before.'" This in-your-face bravado would be funny except that it reveals more perhaps than its author intended: it epitomizes the sad, anti-family philosophy that has made the epidemic possible.

There is even more AIDS chic. Another magazine profiled is *Diseased Pariah News*, a "more wicked publication with a slant toward infected gay men." The magazine cutely advises readers not to subscribe for more than a year, "for the future is mysterious."

Just when you think you can finally escape the Style section and its obsession with tragic homosexual self-obsession, you glance at *Doonesbury* for nostalgia's sake. And there it is in the third panel: Megaphone Mark, former campus radical, sits at the microphone in his radio job: "I'm gay," Mark announces.

Aghast, the reader turns in desperation to a feature on families. But the "family" article includes this gem: "Homosexual households have become so commonplace that many experts now list them under the 'nuclear family' umbrella." Dissenting experts are rarely interviewed by the *Post*, of course, or by the *Los Angeles Times*, where that article originated.

At this point, the reader can't be blamed for wondering, "Is there anyone at the *Washington Post* Style desk (or any big daily's 'soft' sections) who *isn't* gay?" In *After the Ball: How America Will Conquer Its Fear and Hatred of Gays in the '90s*, a remarkably candid book about how homosexuals can obtain power, authors Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen explain why it helps to talk about homosexuality in the media as often as possible: "At least at the outset, we seek desensitization *and nothing more* [italics in original]. You can forget about trying right up front to persuade folks that homosexuality is a *good* thing. But if you can get them to think it is just *another* thing—meriting no more than a shrug of the shoulders—then your battle for legal and social rights is virtually won."

Carefully closing the HIV-positive Style section, the rattled reader turns to the *Post*'s weekly Health supplement, only to find that the gay/AIDS/liberal lobby does not intend to allow an escape to the hinterlands. The headline is "Country Music Breaks the Silence on AIDS," and the article by Abigail Trafford is about the latest vanity from progressive country music stars: a full-blown condom misinformation campaign aimed at rural America, which has ducked the AIDS epidemic simply by being normal and keeping its pants on. The pullout quote from a "rural" AIDS expert outside of Santa Fe ("which has the same per capita incidence of AIDS as Los Angeles") tells it all: "If anyone can reach the Bible Belt, country music can." Now that'd be a real heartbreaker of a song.

—*Robert H. Knight*

KARL HESS—one of the supplest and most creative political thinkers of post-Republic America—died on the same day as Richard Nixon did. His memorial service in Kearneysville, West Virginia, was attended by zero living presidents, which was meet for a man whose conscience impelled him to quit the Power he had once served. Vimful, curious, raucous, Karl Hess belonged to the contumacious American radical tradition of William Leggett and Paul Goodman. He was a journalist with *Newsweek* and the *American Mercury* before becoming Barry Goldwater's chief speechwriter in his 1964 campaign.

As we bogged down in the Big Muddy, Hess reassessed his Republican Party, his hireling status, his personal-parking-space life. "Vietnam," he said, "should remind all conservatives that whenever you put your faith in big government, for any reason, sooner or later you wind up as an apologist for mass murder." Reckoning that the attractive qualities of the 1940's right—its "individualistic, isolationist, decentralist" impulses—had been purged, Hess rushed headlong into the New Left. His best essay, "An Open Letter to Barry Goldwater," (*Ramparts*, August 1969), proposed the consanguinity of Senator Robert Taft and the Black Panthers. He wrote, "Anti-communism twisted the direction of the right, which I feel, if left undisturbed, would today be near the New Left on most major issues," particularly the belief that political power "properly exists only in the people and in their communities."

As a good reckless heedless impetuous American, Karl Hess joined the Wobblies and SDS, grew a beard, donned a workshirt, and picked up an acetylene torch. Looking like a cheerful and gregarious Fidel Castro, the GOP operative took up welding. After a stay in a floating houseboat commune on the Anacostia River, Hess and his wife, Therese, moved to West Virginia, where they lived in a house Karl built largely from scavenged materials. The visionary, the dreamer, the theorist of panideological anti-imperialism spent the last 20 of his 70 years as a concerned neighbor, a loving husband, and the most practical of anarchists.

In a letter to me Karl wrote, "The older I get the more I appreciate the work of being in love as being superior to anything else." As the world went to hell, Karl Hess zestfully and doggedly marched in the other direction.

—*Bill Kauffman*

OBITER DICTA: We wish to note the publication of *Willy Nilly: Bill Clinton Speaks Out*, edited by Edward Moser and published by John Sanders of Caliban Books. An alphabetical ordering of Clinton's flip-flops and contradictions—on everything from abortion and "Nannygate" to Waco and Whitewater—this humorous guide skewers that political animal known as "Slick Willy." The book sells for $8.95 and can be ordered by calling 1-800-350-1101.

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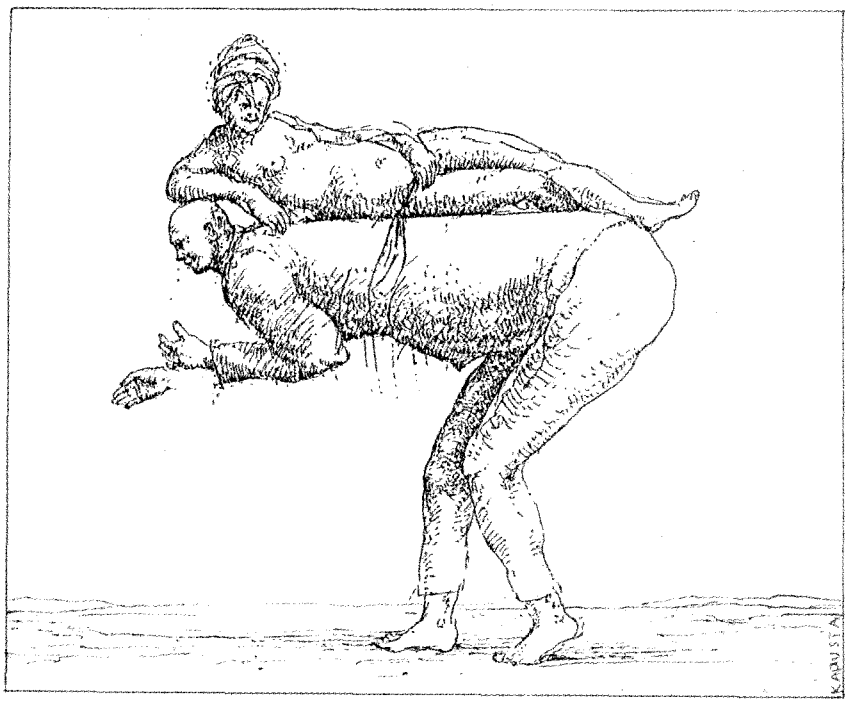

In Praise of Sex and Violence

by Thomas Fleming

All the best authorities agree: there is too much sex and violence in America. Social critics say that pop culture is reinforcing a cult of violence, which they trace back to the savage days of the American frontier; preachers launch jeremiads at the explicit eroticism of MTV, and Planned Parenthood pretends to have the jumps over teen illegitimacy, when their main objection is to life itself; police chiefs blame gangsta rap for inciting violence against the cops and think that disarming the suburbs will restore peace to the inner city; and Jesse Jackson responds by pointing out that the worst pop-cultural cop-killer is not Ice Cube but Terminator Arnold Schwarzenegger, who was a frequent guest of the last Republican occupant of the White House. This must explain the explosion of white-on-black crime.

If you suppose the critique of sex and violence is confined to the experts who make their living telling us what to think, take a look at the many polls showing time after time that a majority of the American people say there is too much sex and violence in the shows they watch every night on television. What do these surveys mean? A few days before the Academy Awards, *USA Today* conducted a poll to determine which film was expected to win best picture. A substantial majority—more than two thirds—picked *Schindler's List*, although only a bit more than 10 percent of them had actually seen it. Roughly the same proportion of Americans says, simultaneously, that they are satisfied with their own health care arrangements but think the system needs reform. We live, quite obviously, in two different worlds: an ever-dwindling realm of private life, where we have some idea of what we are doing, and the fast-expanding empire of publicity in which we all know the right thing to say, no matter what our own personal experience has been:

> Sex and violence, violence and sex;
> TV is a gulag, the viewers are zeks.

Despite the inevitable coupling of sex and violence, the critique from the left—which constitutes the greater part of cultural criticism—is directed toward violence alone. Films featuring Clint Eastwood, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Mel Gibson are part of a culture of violence, the critics tell us. As modernists, they are in a bit of a bind in deploring the growth of violence, particularly since they are fond of championing senseless brutality when used by avant-garde novelists or by performance artists who shoot themselves in the arm. Graphic violence, like graphic sex, was supposed to shake us out of our Victorian complacency and put us in touch with those reptilian forces that Dr. Freud found lurking beneath the placid surface of conscious life. But now that D. H. Lawrence and William Burroughs have been translated into street language for the masses, the pundits want to draw the line, where they always want to draw it, right at the point where their opinions might affect themselves.

The usual solution to the dilemma is a dog-eared cliché: the stark brutality of contemporary films is not so evil as the cartoon-like violence of John Wayne movies, in which people are killed in a graceful ballet, without bloodshed or horror. By graphically depicting the carnage, Sam Peckinpah and his successors have shown us the horrors of violence, etc., etc. This sort of defense inevitably reminds us of the prefaces that used

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to be included in erotic novels: "The tragic lives of these disturbed people will serve as a warning to all"—Robert Alzheimers, M.D., New York City.

What the modernists really object to in a John Wayne movie is the moral context. Old Westerns were, for the most part, morality plays, in which good men did their best to defend themselves, their families, and their communities against violent and anarchic outlaws and Indians. Bad men were not portrayed as victims of an insensitive world but as ruthless individualists who knew what they wanted and would stop at nothing to get it.

This formula, of course, applies only to the serials and B-movies. The really great Westerns—*The Searchers*, *Red River*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *High Noon*, and *The Shootist*—are among the most serious and complex films made in America, and yet the moral lines were always etched in crystal. To consider only the last of them, Don Siegel's *The Shootist*, it is the story of youth and age, of a nation growing up and perhaps growing old, but above all it is the story of how a young man (Ron Howard) turns from the cult of violence for the sake of violence as he learns to appreciate the code of the gunfighter J.B. Books (John Wayne): "I won't be wronged. I won't be insulted. I won't be laid a hand on. I don't do these things to others, and I require the same from them."

In the end, Books (who, like John Wayne, is dying of cancer) sacrifices himself in a gunfight, where he manages to kill all of the boy's hoodlum heroes—Hugh O'Brian, Richard Boone, and Hugh McKinney—and the boy tosses the gun away, in an ending reminiscent both of *High Noon* and Siegel's own *Dirty Harry*. In the gun fight, Siegel had wanted Wayne to shoot one of the gunmen in the back, but the old man refused: "Whatever the cause, I would never shoot anyone in the back. It's unthinkable for my image." The story is told in Siegel's recently published memoir (posthumous, of course), *A Siegel Film: An Autobiography* (Faber & Faber).

But it was not a question of image so much as it was the code of John Wayne—and John B. Books, and Clint Eastwood, who almost never observes the proprieties, makes his Wild West show hero Bronco Billy very tender of his image in front of the "little pards" because he knows the influence he has over them. John Wayne's view of Clint Eastwood was necessarily ambiguous. When Siegel tries to argue that Eastwood's films contain "very little gratuitous violence, sex, or bad language," the Duke explodes: "Bulls--t! His films are full of f--king, g---amn obscenities. It's a bad image to paint himself into. A f--king shame"—and Wayne insisted on having the profanity lifted from the script of *The Shootist*.

In view of the Duke's own colorful way of speaking, Siegel found his on-screen prissiness amusing, but Wayne knew something that once upon a time we all used to know. He came from an age when men, who could cuss a blue streak in saloons or behind the barn, did their best to keep a civil tongue in public, especially when there were women and children present. Setting aside pornography, the makers of movies and television shows have to assume that their productions will end up in the living rooms of American families. Then why should films not conform to the same rules that govern the family parlor? In Terry Southern's script for Evelyn Waugh's *The Loved One*, Robert Morley (playing a stuffy English actor) declares that he would never do in front of the camera what he would not do in his own home. The line is pompous and absurd but truer than Southern probably imagined.

I cannot speak for the families of the 90's, where fathers may spend the evening flipping through *Penthouse* as their children watch a retrospective on Madonna's classic videos, but until not too long ago, there were certain decencies and proprieties—perhaps too many of them—that had to be observed: "Please, not in front of the children" could silence discussions of biblical inerrancy or the plays of George Bernard Shaw. As most mothers know, it is better to be on the safe side. "Little pitchers have big ears."

Then what are we doing, letting this flood of toxic waste into our very homes? Nude scenes, blood baths, smarmy sex jokes, repeated over and over with the mechanical efficiency of Sade. In despair, parents may choose to escape to the brainless sitcoms and heartburning dramas of The Family Channel. What you will find, at the dinner hour no less, are advertisements for products relating to what we used to call female complaints. "What's that for, daddy?" is an inevitable question, and I wonder how evangelical parents handle it. Rather than face these commercials, I think I would prefer attending an erotic film festival or being strapped to a chair in front of a continuous double-feature of *Straw Dogs* and *Pat Garret and Billy the Kid* (arguably the dumbest film ever made by a serious director, if you exempt the complete *oeuvre* of Robert Altman). This is no idle boast, since I once spent the night in an all-night movie theater in Manhattan, fending off aggressive queers and trying to shut out the horror of Li'l Abner and Jerry Lewis as *The Bellboy*.

The Athenians, who were a civilized people, did not portray either sex or violence in their tragedies, even though the themes of these plays ran the gamut from incest to parricide. The sex and violence were limited to lyric songs or messenger speeches. Peter Arnott, who used to do puppet-theater versions of the classics, told me that he once had occasion to put on a repeat performance of the *Oedipus* at a high school in Detroit. Sophocles was a big hit, even the second time around, but one of the students wanted to know if the principal had made him cut out the scene where Oedipus takes the brooches off the dress of his hanged wife and plunges them into his eyes. The student had, of course, "seen" the episode recounted by the messenger.

Why should words be less corrosive than live-action scenes? Perhaps it is because poetry turns even the reader or listener into a quasi-artist, who makes what he can out of the material, and in recreating the dramatic stuff, we master it. Stage performances and, even more so, films overwhelm our imagination and fill our heads with the artificial memory of experiences that we have never had but cannot forget. They are like the artificial memory implant that haunts the dreams of Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Total Recall* (a film based on a brilliant idea of Philip K. Dick).

Sex and violence are the stuff of life, and real human cultures circumscribe them with rituals and rules that make it possible to incorporate these basic forces into society. These proprieties are infinitely varied, but they are observed in savagery and in civilization, by Calvinists and cannibals. We, of course, know better, and think nothing of drenching ourselves in blood or sticking our noses into projection-screened copulations of the male and female prostitutes who win Academy Awards. My students used to protest the barbarity of gladiatorial games, and when I pointed out the numbers of people they saw murdered every night on television and in movies, they invariably replied:

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"But those aren't real." But is that what you are thinking, as you watch the bloodbaths in *The Untouchables*? This isn't really happening? That's why you spend $7.50 to see an attractive stand-in flash her privates for a less well-endowed "actress," just to keep in mind that it is only a movie?

The last time I heard an intelligent comment on this question was years ago on the *Tonight Show*, when Tiny Tim, sanctimoniously decrying sex on the screen, told Mr. Carson that they ought to take sex out of the theaters and put it back where it belongs—in the home. But that solution would no doubt disturb the directors of Planned Parenthood.

There is nothing wrong with either sex or violence, any more than wind and water and fire are evil because of the damage they sometimes inflict. Eros and Eris, desire and conflict, are the magnetic poles of human social life, more essential to us, as human beings, than air, food, and water. But on this side there is no end to strife

Where violence has taken love to wife—
A pagan tale of Venus and of Mars
Matter of fact and heedless as the stars
Of carnage down in our too human wars.

The Romans made love and war their national gods, and Lucretius used Mars and Venus to explain the nature of the universe. We, on the other hand, are content to put them on the stage and make them fight and fornicate for the spectators' nickels. Ours is a peep-show culture. Since we dare not face life in the raw, we first drug ourselves then peep through the electronic blinds to catch a glimpse of our more interesting neighbors—like Jimmy Stewart, in *Rear Window*, but at least Jimmy Stewart had the excuse of a broken leg.

In the film version of Nabokov's *Lolita*, Clare Quilty (Peter Sellers), begging for his life, offers to arrange for Humbert Humbert to see executions: "You like to watch?" And when in Jerzy Kosinski's *Being There* the prostitute asks the retarded manservant (Peter Sellers again) what he likes, Sellers' answer, "I like to watch," is a kind of response, delayed by decades, to his own question in *Lolita*. Of course, he just means TV, but Sellers' dimwitted valet—so reminiscent of Kosinski's friend, the equally dull and impotent Andy Warhol, whose greatest kick was to watch his friends making it—is the American Everyman who, by the end of the film, is both President and Messiah.

The trouble with America is not that there is too much sex and violence, but too little, or rather too little of the real things, which also go by the names of love and courage. There are all too many middle-class Casanovas who lack the imaginative conviction required of a faithful husband, or even of a French husband who enjoys his mistress and loves his family; and there is an infestation of punks who have the nerve to shoot defenseless strangers, knowing full well that even if they are caught, they will only be transferred from one welfare system to another. All they lack is the courage to take a minimum-wage job and defend their building against the feral dogs that roam the halls.

If America were really a sexy-violent society, we would see middle-class men, armed and dangerous, protecting their teenage daughters from the high school basketball players who treat them like so much pork, and they would march upon the television station, like a national liberation army, and seize control. In fact, all the whining about sex and violence in our society, when it is not mere cant repeated by rote, reflects the instinctive fear that cowards feel when they are confronted by real life, by men who love a woman so passionately that they do not become disenchanted when she reaches 35 and who would, like an earlier generation of New Hampshiremen, prefer to live free or die. ©

LIBERAL ARTS

P.C. SMOKE

"The *New York Times* has found a new venue for politically correct moralizing," reported Scott McConnell in the *New York Post* last May: the obituaries. "Readers were gratuitously informed that French geneticist Jerome Lejeune, dead at 67 because of lung cancer, was 'a heavy smoker.' The *Times* obit page hasn't yet begun informing us whether various people who have died of AIDS were promiscuous homosexuals, or whether heart attack victims were fat and avoided exercise--and, truth be told, we don't really expect it to. In PC land, smokers are the one social group made to feel responsible for the deleterious consequences of their own behavior."

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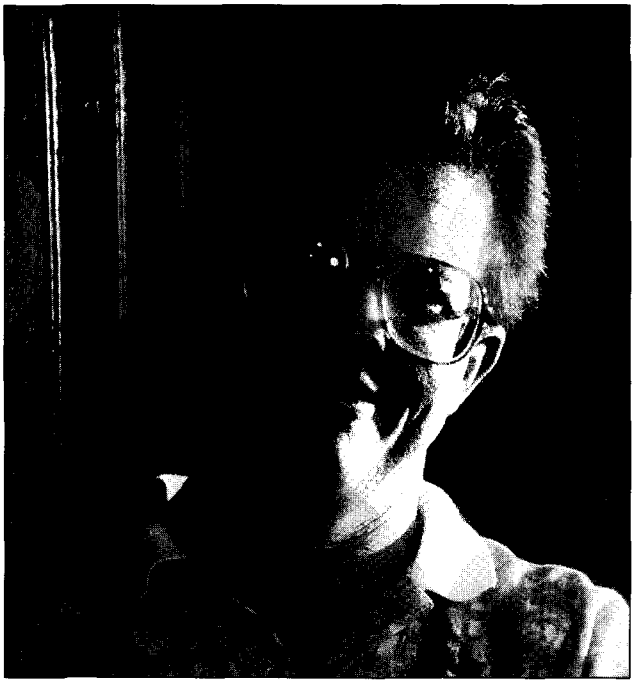
Tom Kite was saying very nice things about our magazine until we mentioned the coupon offer. Then he cut it out.

–By Tom Kite



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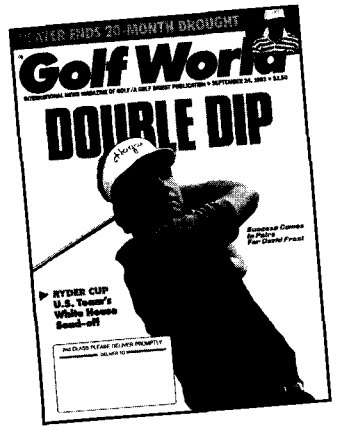

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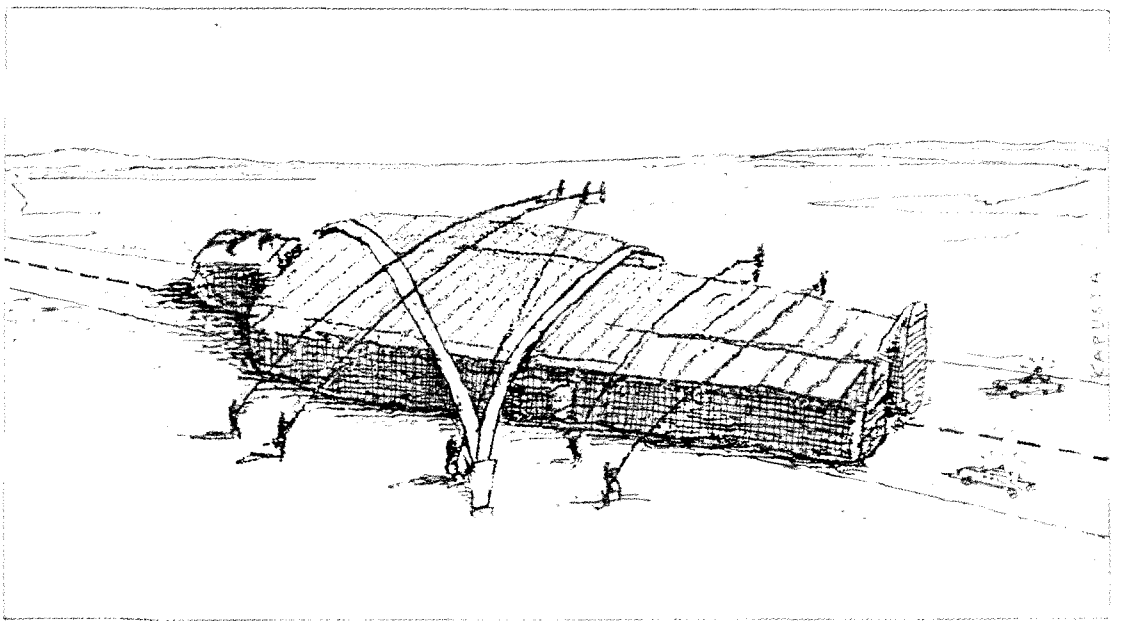
Anarcho-Tyranny, U.S.A.

by Samuel Francis



On the morning of September 22, 1993, a law-abiding citizen named B.W. Sanders was driving his car down the street in Raleigh, North Carolina, when all of a sudden he found himself flagged down by a policeman and presented with a ticket for $25. Mr. Sanders, it turned out, had not been wearing his seat belt, and under a new state law, that crime carries the penalty he received. But in this case it was not just a traffic cop who flagged down Mr. Sanders. It was a force of some six dozen police officers as well as the governor of North Carolina himself, James B. Hunt. The governor was searching for a photo-op with which to advertise both the new seat belt law and his own personal devotion to law and order. Not only the 70 or more police officers but also an innumerable supply of newspaper reporters and TV newsmen were on the scene to record the governor's triumph over the forces of lawlessness, and the next day Mr. Sanders' wicked ways were recorded in the public press for his family, his employers, his neighbors, and indeed posterity to gander at. To make doubly certain that criminals like Mr. Sanders got the message loud and clear, Governor Hunt held a news conference near the state capital and harangued a crowd of some 150 police officers and state troopers, who were able to take time off from the apprehension of public enemies like Mr. Sanders to attend the governor's words. "I took an oath to protect the people of North Carolina," intoned the Tar Heel State's answer to Dirty Harry, "and this is one way we must do it. . . . Folks, we're serious. We mean it. We're going to do this." And indeed, serious he is. As part of the war on the unbuckled seat belt crisis, the Raleigh *News and Observer* reported, "Law officers in all 100 counties [of the state] will intensify their efforts to find and cite motorists not using their seat belts. Agencies will compete against each other, winning cash for turning in the best performance."

Governor Hunt's grandstanding might be harmless enough were it not for certain other facts about certain other crimes in North Carolina that also sometimes make the news. Only a week before the apprehension and public humiliation of Mr. Sanders, the same newspaper reported on the state's prison crisis. It seems that North Carolina has another new law in addition to the one on seat belts. This other law, passed by the General Assembly, imposes a cap on how many inmates can be incarcerated in the state prison, and the crisis is that, under this cap, most of the inmates now eligible for parole were imprisoned for violent and assaultive crimes. Most of the less dangerous criminals have already been turned loose, and now the prison system must release public enemies even more dangerous than drivers who do not buckle their seat belts. Since last June, no less than 14 parolees (including one of the men now charged with the murder of Michael Jordan's father) have been arrested and charged with murder, and another parolee, a veteran of the state's death row, murdered his girlfriend and then committed suicide, thereby unfairly depriving Governor Hunt of yet another photo-op. Last August alone, North Carolina paroled 3,700 prison inmates. One might think that if the governor of the state and the 150 police officers and state troopers who took time out of their public jobs to listen to him slap himself on the back for busting poor Mr. Sanders were really interested in upholding their oaths of office, they might turn their attention to the results of releasing hardened and vi-

Samuel Francis, a nationally syndicated columnist for the Washington Times, *delivered this speech at the 1993 meeting of the John Randolph Club.*

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olent criminals who have already been caught, sentenced, and imprisoned.

But the saga of the Napoleon of Crime in the homely person of B.W. Sanders is not an isolated incident. It is a representative tale that illustrates what I take to be an entirely new form of government, one that as far as I can tell is unique in human history and unknown to political theory, ancient or modern. Probably no other society has failed as dismally as the United States in the late 20th century to meet the basic test of any civilization: to enforce simple order and protect the lives and property of its members. History knows of many societies that have succumbed to anarchy when the central government proved unable to control warlords, rebels, and marauding invaders. But anarchy is not quite the problem here.

In the United States today, the government performs many of its functions more or less effectively. The mail is delivered (sometimes); the population, or at least part of it, is counted (sort of); and taxes are collected (you bet). You can accuse the federal leviathan of many things—corruption, incompetence, waste, bureaucratic strangulation—but mere anarchy, the lack of effective government, is not one of them. Yet at the same time, the state does not perform effectively or justly its basic duty of enforcing order and punishing criminals, and in this respect its failures do bring the country or important parts of it close to a state of anarchy. But that semblance of anarchy is coupled with many of the characteristics of tyranny, under which innocent and law-abiding citizens are punished by the state or suffer gross violations of their rights and liberty at the hands of the state. The result is what seems to be the first society in history in which elements of both anarchy and tyranny pertain at the same time and seem to be closely connected with each other and to constitute more or less opposite sides of the same coin.

This condition, which in some of my columns I have called "anarcho-tyranny," is essentially a kind of Hegelian synthesis of what appear to be dialectical opposites, the combination of oppressive government power against the innocent and the law-abiding and, simultaneously, a grotesque paralysis of the ability or the will to use that power to carry out basic public duties such as protection of public safety. And it is characteristic of anarcho-tyranny that it not only fails to punish criminals and enforce legitimate order but also criminalizes the innocent, that at the same time the governor of North Carolina grotesquely fails to uphold his famous oath to protect the citizens of his state by keeping convicted felons in prison, he has no problem finding the time to organize a massive waste of his time and the taxpayers' money to hound and humiliate a perfectly innocent citizen for the infraction of a trivial traffic law.

In fact, we criminalize the innocent all the time in the United States today—through asset seizure laws that confiscate your property even before you're convicted of possessing illegal drugs; through mandatory brainwashing programs designed to reconstruct your mind with "sensitivity training," "human relations," and rehabilitation if you display politically incorrect ideas on certain occasions; through prosecuting people like Bernhard Goetz who use guns to defend themselves; and through gun control laws in general. Under anarcho-tyranny, gun control laws do not usually target criminals who use guns to commit their crimes. The usual suspects are noncriminals who own, carry, or use guns against criminals—like the Korean store owners in Los Angeles or like Mr. Goetz, who spent several months in jail after picking off the three hoodlums who were making ready to liberate him from life and limb.

Indeed, the government response to crime is by far the best illustration of anarcho-tyranny. On the one hand, police forces are better equipped, better trained, and more expensive than ever before in history. Police routinely use computers, have access to nationwide information banks, and carry weapons and communication gadgets that most tyrants of the past would drool over. Yet the police seem utterly baffled by the murder rate. None of their high-tech whiz-bang helps much to catch serious criminals after they have struck, to stop them before they strike, or to keep them off the streets after they are caught. But while the police cannot do much about murderers, rapists, and robbers, they are geniuses at nabbing less serious lawbreakers. They can crack down on tax-dodgers and speeders, jaywalkers and pornography patrons, seat belt nonbucklers and epithet-emitters, gun owners and graffiti-scratchers.

Obviously, such desperate characters are not the reason decent people are scared to walk the streets at night, and no matter how many of them you put in the pokey, civilization and the order it is based on will not survive unless you control the streets. Under anarcho-tyranny, the goal is to avoid performing such basic functions as stopping real crime and to think up purely fictitious functions that will raise revenue, enhance the power of the police or bureaucrats, and foster the illusion that the state is doing its job. The victims of these new functions and laws are precisely otherwise law-abiding and innocent citizens. It's easier and more profitable to enforce the law against the marginal lawbreaker than against those habitually committed to spreading mayhem.

One example of a victim of anarcho-tyranny is a man named Keith Jacobson, an elderly farmer and school bus driver in Nebraska. Mr. Jacobson has a sexual fixation on children, and while that constitutes a sexual perversion, he says he has never satisfied his fixation by having sex with a child, and indeed prior to 1987 he had never been arrested at all. However, he does like to peruse pornography that depicts children engaged in sexual poses and activities, and when in 1987 he received in the mail some solicitations to purchase some of this smut, he ordered it. Eventually, this material arrived and he went to his local post office to pick it up. When he returned to his farm, he found two federal postal inspectors waiting for him. They promptly arrested him and charged him with violating federal statutes forbidding the purchase of child pornography through the mail, and it turned out that the material he had bought had in fact been produced by the postal service itself and sent through the mail by the postal service in an undercover sting operation conducted by the postal service. For some years, postal inspectors had devoted their energies to ferreting out Mr. Jacobson's perverse habits, encouraging them, and then, finally, pouncing on him. As a result, Mr. Jacobson lost his farm to pay for his legal defense, he lost his job as a school bus driver, and he lost all his friends and standing in his small community when his sexual habits came to light. Eventually, the Supreme Court exonerated him, but in the meanwhile his life had been totally ruined.

The rationale for the harassment and entrapment of Keith Jacobson was that child pornography, illegal under federal law, is often produced in foreign countries like Denmark or Mexico and that the law cannot reach those who produce it and who often kidnap or seduce children into taking part in it. Therefore, law enforcement has to concentrate on the consumers of

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child pornography rather than on its producers, in order to deter the trade. This, of course, is a transparent sophism.

In my view, there is every reason for the federal government to ban the import of child pornography into the United States, to ban interstate traffic in it, and to prohibit sending it through the mails, but the target of the law should be and originally was supposed to be those who produce it and distribute it for profit, as well as those who kidnap, trade in, or seduce children. It is those individuals who cause the social evil of child pornography, not casual consumers of it, let alone those who buy it only because the federal government has enticed them into buying it, as Mr. Jacobson did, and if the producers are ordinarily beyond the reach of the law, it does not follow that law-abiding citizens like Jacobson should be targeted, persecuted, and ruined.

The Jacobson case is particularly important because in a way it was a kind of prototype for the later cases of David Koresh and Randy Weaver, and it may reflect a deliberate strategy by which admittedly bizarre people are selected for persecution. Few people can be expected to rush to the defense of a religious crackpot like Koresh, a white separatist like Weaver, or a pedophile like Jacobson when their rights are threatened, and conservatives in particular can be expected to overlook the procedural irregularities in these cases if they disapprove of or condemn the substance of what the targets are doing, but once these cases become precedents, citizens who are considerably less bizarre in their personal habits and beliefs than many conservatives will be safe for the anarcho-tyrants to hit.

Indeed, the entrapment and destruction of Keith Jacobson is typical of anarcho-tyranny. Having passed a law that is virtually unenforceable against those it was ostensibly intended to reach, government turns its efforts against those it was not intended to punish, which means the law-abiding. If you cannot or will not punish the criminal, criminalize and punish the innocent and then boast of how you are being tough on crooks. The same dynamic of anarcho-tyranny is evident in the notorious asset seizure laws. There are a number of cases on record of homeowners or owners of planes or boats who have lost their property because small amounts of drugs, often nothing more than marijuana, were found in or on them, often because an employee, guest, or family member, rather than the actual owner, had possession of the drug. These cases are bad enough in themselves, but the most notorious, which has received virtually no attention in the national press as far as I know except for a column by Paul Craig Roberts, concerns Donald Scott of Malibu. Perhaps the case is better known in California than it is in the rest of the country, but Mr. Scott's victimization by anarcho-tyranny caused him to pay an even higher price than Randy Weaver or David Koresh or Keith Jacobson.

Mr. Scott was a millionaire who had inherited his fortune and lived in a five million dollar estate in Malibu. One night he was awakened by the sound of his front door crashing in, and, evidently thinking his house was being invaded by robbers, he got up, seized a gun, and went out to protect his life and home. Actually, he was right; his home had been invaded by robbers, in the form of a 30-man raiding party composed of Los Angeles Sheriff's Office personnel, federal drug agents, and the California National Guard. When Mr. Scott appeared with a gun in his hand, they shot him dead in his own home. The killers claimed to have some reason to think that Mr. Scott's wife was using drugs, though apparently no drugs were ever found. They also happened to have in their files an appraisal of Mr. Scott's estate and notes on the value of adjacent property, and one legal expert who has examined the case believes the purpose of the whole raid was simply to seize private property for the U.S. Treasury under federal assets seizure laws on the fabricated pretext of drug use. The murderers of Mr. Scott pled self-defense and were let off.

Again, as with federal child pornography statutes, there should be no problem with laws that include as punishment for drug dealing the confiscation of property or assets. But under some of the asset seizure laws, property can be confiscated prior to conviction and often with little attention to the actual or serious guilt of the property owner, and they are virtual bottomless pits by which law enforcement agencies can essentially steal private property to bolster their own budgets. As with other anarcho-tyrannical measures, real drug dealers, who often contrive to hide their assets, are frequently not affected; the law falls mainly on law-abiding citizens.

Yet probably the most common example of anarcho-tyranny in practice are gun control laws, and as you know there is now a concerted effort across the country to abolish private gun ownership entirely. That goal used to be a kind of hidden agenda of the gun control lobby, and every nutty gun control measure that was introduced was accompanied by sneering denials that it would go any further. But in recent years the agenda has come out of the closet. Congressman Major Owens of New York actually introduced a constitutional amendment last year to repeal the Second Amendment, and before he did so, conservative columnist George Will had already endorsed its repeal; this is perhaps the first time in history that a congressman has proposed repealing part of the Bill of Rights. Mr. Owens says that the Second Amendment is "not needed" in the United States today, and Mr. Will argues that what he calls "police saturation" will provide an adequate substitute for the private security offered by guns. "Police saturation," or as Mr. Will describes it, "a policeman on every corner," is of course a euphemism for a police state, and it is entirely characteristic of Mr. Will's brand of Fascism Properly Understood.

The fact is that the police and the criminal justice system do not offer protection, nor can they. We have too many policemen in this country already; to go back to Raleigh for a moment, where the governor is so zealous about his oath to protect the citizens, I recall that when I happened to visit the city some months ago, there had been a serious car accident in the middle of the afternoon that tied up local traffic for hours. I rode by the site of the accident around eight o'clock that night, and even though there was no congestion at all, even though the vehicles involved had long since been removed and whatever people were injured had long since been taken to the hospital, there were five police vehicles and five policemen still on the scene. It is not at all uncommon in this country to see speed traps, sobriety checks, etc., that take up the time of five or six or more policemen for several hours. In Washington, it is a regular feature of the morning rush hour from northern Virginia to see several local policemen wandering around in traffic in the middle of Route 395 just before you reach the 14th Street Bridge for the purpose of pulling over drivers who were driving on the shoulders of the road. As long as the police can afford to assign personnel to these trivial functions or to such perennial aggravations as parking enforcement at a time when urban crime rates are higher than ever, there is no reason to talk about the need for yet more policemen, nor is there any reason

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to call in the National Guard, the Special Forces, or Boutros-Boutros and his Blue Helmets to do the job civilian authorities refuse to do.

In any case, the policemen we already have seem to spend an inordinate amount of their time enforcing the law against the marginal lawbreaker and avoiding enforcement against serious criminals. This became a national scandal in the Los Angeles riots when police actually arrested store owners who were carrying weapons to protect themselves against the rioters while carefully avoiding confrontations with rioters and, in at least one case, even passed by a store that was being looted.

In Virginia, we have a recent and outstanding example of anarcho-tyranny at work in Governor Douglas Wilder's "one gun a month" law. Since last July in Virginia, it has been illegal to buy more than one handgun a month, on the reasoning, offered by the BATF, that more than 40 percent of the guns used in crimes in New York and Washington are imported from Virginia, where gun control laws are lax. The gunrunners, vows a BATF spokesman, just "fill up their trunks" with firepower and "hightail it up Interstate 95." One hopes they do not drive on the shoulders of the road or leave their seat belts unbuckled.

What never seems to occur to any of these anarcho-tyrants is that Virginians were able to buy guns legally (and as many as they wanted) and still avoid murdering each other as much as New Yorkers and Washingtonians do. Thus, in 1989, there were about 72 murders for every 100,000 people in the District of Columbia but less than 8 per 100,000 in the whole state of Virginia. In the same year, the Big Apple took a bite out of the lives of nearly 26 people per 100,000. The point is that in Virginia people buy guns legally and do not slaughter each other with them the way they do in New York and Washington, even though both cities have strict gun control laws and Virginia had virtually none. Unable or unwilling to punish the criminals who sell guns, buy them, or use them in these metropolises, the anarcho-tyrants must therefore punish law-abiding Virginians by restricting their gun rights. Under anarcho-tyranny, government fails to enforce the laws and perform the functions it has a legitimate duty to enforce and perform, while it invents laws and functions it has no legitimate duty or valid reason to make or carry out.

While one characteristic of anarcho-tyranny is its propensity to criminalize and punish the innocent and the law-abiding while refusing to punish the criminals, another is its refusal to enforce the laws it has already enacted and to enact more laws that have no effect on real crime and that further criminalize the innocent or restrict their rights. Governor Wilder's law shows this, and it is interesting that barely two months after the law went into effect in Virginia, the BATF announced that 40 percent of the guns now used in Washington crimes come from Maryland, so we must have a similar law there. The logical conclusion, of course, is that there should be a United Nations Convention on Handguns, under which handguns would be outlawed everywhere in the world, with international sanctions and tribunals against the provinces of the New World Order that fail to obey and with contingents of blue berets, presumably armed with handguns themselves, to enforce it. I suggest General Aidid as the commander of the force.

Colorado's new law forbidding minors from owning guns is also a recent instance of gun control anarcho-tyranny. Passed this summer on the grounds that too many minors are killing each other with guns, the law merely imposes a five-day jail sentence on any minor who possesses a gun (except sometimes). Of course, no minor with a gun who is disposed to commit a crime with it is likely to be deterred by five days in jail; most such teenagers spend a good part of their adolescence in and out of jail. The only people who will be so deterred will be otherwise law-abiding minors who carry guns to protect themselves from their not-so-law-abiding cohorts whom the anarcho-tyrants do nothing to control.

Under anarcho-tyranny, the state creates a problem, declares an emergency or crisis—the drug war, the carjacking crisis, Islamic fundamentalism—and then exploits that problem as an instrument by which it continues to enhance its power, though neither the fake problem it exploits nor the real problem that exists is affected.

Yet one of my favorite examples of anarcho-tyranny is the crime bill that Congress considered last year. Its most notable feature was the authorization of the death penalty for no less than 51 different crimes, so that senators could boast to their constituents of the Draconian retribution they are itching to visit upon wrongdoers. That sounds really tough, but the new capital crimes included such exotic offenses as genocide, treason, and espionage, and inflicting death for these would protect the average citizen on the street about as much as directing traffic regulates pigeon droppings. The average housewife usually is not too worried that Pol Pot or Julius Rosenberg will jump her when she walks through the supermarket parking lot at night.

Many of the other 48 offenses for which the law would have executed you simply protect officeholders. The bill authorized the death penalty for murdering the President, members of Congress, members of the Cabinet and the Supreme Court, court officers, and relatives of a federal official; for the killers of jurors, witnesses, crime victims, informants, foreign officials, state officials assisting federal officials; and, specifically, for the murderers of officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including horse inspectors, poultry inspectors, egg inspectors, nuclear regulatory inspectors, and meat inspectors. Senators who voted for the bill do not have to worry about losing the egg-inspector vote.

It then proceeded to dispatch to the scaffold a whole penal colony of atrocity-doers: aircraft hijackers; those who commit arson on federal property; those who commit murder in the course of a violent crime, murder in the course of depriving someone of his civil rights, murder in the course of depriving someone of his religious rights, murder in the course of a kid-

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napping or a bank robbery, terrorist murders abroad, hostage-taking, murder for hire, murder in the course of racketeering, and murder while serving a life sentence. The latter is particularly interesting, since about the only person a lifer could murder would be either a prison guard or another prisoner. But there is no reason why a prison guard or a convict (or, for that matter, the President, a federal chicken doctor, or a visiting dog-catcher from Denmark) should enjoy what amounts to more protection of the law than a gas station attendant.

The crime bill also offered a generous serving of gun control chocolate sauce and the usual swag for local and state police as well as some $300 million for "drug emergency areas," also known as "cities," that just can't say no to federal boodle. Then it gets back to more meaningless death penalties: death for anybody who commits a crime with a firearm if the weapon has moved across state or national boundaries. Death again for anybody who intentionally kills someone in the District of Columbia in a drug-related crime. And death once more for the much-dreaded "drug kingpins," laboriously defined in the bill as those who have had at least three prior felony convictions with minimum prison sentences of at least 20 years each and who are operating drug enterprises with at least five employees and grossing $10 million a year. Whether convicts who meet this otiose definition are any more common than spies, traitors, and genocide-committers is not clear, but my guess is that they are virtually a legal fiction never heard of outside of *Miami Vice* reruns.

Death, death, death, death, cried the senators as they packed the bill off to the House. You would think this was the most bloodthirsty crowd of lawmakers since Madame Defarge knitted socks in front of the guillotine. But before you come to such a conclusion, there is one little secret you ought to know: not since 1963 has the federal government executed anybody, nor does it have any facilities for carrying out an execution. For all the blood poured forth on the Senate floor in and over this bill and its grisly provisions, it was a fair bet that not a single person would ever have gone to the gallows under it. That is because enforcing the death penalty has nothing to do with passing more laws to buck up those already on the books that are not enforced anyway, but instead depends on whether those who pass and execute the laws are serious about justice. In any event, the bill died in conference, though its descendant stalks the Congress today in President Clinton's "policeman on every corner" bill, this time with no less than 64 new capital offenses. Who knows what they are? Who cares, since the lawmakers who concocted them have no intention of enforcing them anyway. My guess is that the mega-death penalty bill last year was never intended to pass, that it was just grandstanding for the senators, who intended to execute the bill itself before any real murderer was executed under its stupid and redundant provisions.

Yet one interesting thing about the bill is that it shows how conservatives in Congress have totally abandoned the principle of federalism. One congressional staffer in a Republican office told me that the bill's death penalty provisions were intended to enforce the death penalty in states that "refused" to enact it themselves—in other words, to sneak around the principle of federalism and states' rights and to force a criminal statute down the throats of unwilling states. I believe strongly in the death penalty for a number of criminal offenses, and I believe every state ought to pass it and enforce it effectively, but under no circumstances should the federal government be able to force or dragoon any state into adopting the death penalty or any other criminal statute it does not want or believe in. Obviously, it was mainly conservatives who were pushing the mega-death bill, so let us endure no more sermons from these Solons about "judicial activism" or other violations of federalism when those violations tread on local interests that are politically important to the lawmakers. Having surrendered the federalist and states' rights principles, they cannot expect those principles to be respected by others who have more uses for the federal leviathan than turning it into an oversized gas chamber.

There are several reasons why anarcho-tyranny flourishes. In the first place, it is obviously an easy way for government bureaucrats and lawmakers to enhance their own power and the public funds at their disposal by playing on legitimate and well-founded fears of citizens over crime. It might seem that it would be just as easy for anarcho-tyrants to actually do something about crime instead of rehearsing all the pretenses of doing something about it. But the fact is that there is almost *nothing* the government today can do about crime. The essential reason for this is that, since the promulgation of the Incorporation Doctrine by the Supreme Court and the ensuing Warren revolution in criminal law, the control of the criminal justice system has been removed from the control of lawmakers and elected officials as well as from law enforcement and is now almost entirely subordinate to the judicial system. Thus, there can be no local politician who wins election by promising and carrying out an effective program of crime-fighting because any effective laws or punishments he might enact will be dependent on the consent of the courts. Since law enforcement remains primarily a local and state function but is effectively under the control of federal courts, local law-and-order leaders can do nothing effective and have to make do with anarcho-tyrannical applesauce. While crime and public safety remain important and legitimate concerns of voters, the response of politicians and police almost has to be to promise the false and dangerous solutions of anarcho-tyranny, to change subtly the definition of crime by expanding it to include the innocent and the law-abiding, and to avoid any serious challenge to real criminals. And institutionalizing anarcho-tyrannical functions in such agencies as the BATF merely creates incentives for its bureaucrats to pursue the kind of dangerous and useless measures the bureau has become notorious for. Under anarcho-tyranny, the state creates a problem (which sometimes actually has some connection to reality), declares an emergency or crisis—the drug war, drug emergency areas, the carjacking crisis, Islamic fundamentalism—and then exploits that problem as an instrument by which it continues to enhance its power, though neither the fake problem it exploits nor the real problem that exists is affected. The anarchy that anarcho-tyranny breeds thus serves as the rationale for the tyranny it builds, and the dynamic of anarcho-tyranny is essentially the same "ratchet effect" that Robert Higgs identifies as the principal source of Big Government in the 20th century.

But there is also another reason why anarcho-tyranny flourishes. Throughout this century, in tandem with the emergence of the leviathan state, there has occurred a managed pacification and manipulation of the citizens, with the result that Americans are increasingly habituated to an entirely passive role in government, economy, culture, and now even basic social functions such as childrearing and health care. This process of pacification is closely related to the managerial revolution in

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the United States and the emergence of centralized, technically skilled elites that specialize in the usurpation of previously autonomous social functions. Hence, just as Americans in the mass-managerial regime are dependent on mass corporations, offices, and factories for their livelihoods, just as they are dependent on mass political parties and illusory mass participation in the political process, just as they are dependent on and engulfed by the mass culture that is continuously fed to them in spectator sports, television, film, art, music, and popular literature, and just as in all these dimensions of life Americans increasingly surrender the active and participatory roles that republican government demands, so too in anarcho-tyranny we are habituated to an entirely passive role in securing our protection from criminals. George Will's "police saturation" is indeed the logical and practical outcome of this kind of mass pacification, as more and more Americans swallow the lie that they are too stupid and too reckless to protect themselves, their homes, and their families and that cops who could barely make it through high school and bureaucrats who cannot support themselves outside a government payroll must do it for them.

Yet there are signs that some Americans are not buying into the lie of anarcho-tyranny, that at least as far as crime and personal safety are concerned, some are awakening to the ancient lesson of republican government, that in order to govern yourself politically you must first be able to govern yourself personally and morally and that that lesson means assuming responsibility for your own protection. For months in 1987 in Detroit, citizens complained to the police about teenage prostitutes from a crack house in the neighborhood who solicited old men and adolescents on the street, about drug dealers firing guns in the air for fun, and about a shoot-out between drug gangs while neighborhood children played in the street. Not once did the police respond to any of the repeated calls. Then one day after the shoot-out, two local men named Angelo Parisi and Perry Kent walked up the street, set fire to the crack house, and burned it to the ground, and within minutes police arrived to charge them with two counts of arson and assault with a deadly weapon. With community support, both men were acquitted by a jury of all charges, and there are stories similar to theirs in other American cities.

Soon after the Los Angeles riots, the *New York Times* recounted the story of a 20-year-old janitor, David Penso, who enjoyed the less-than-bracing experience of watching a local discount store being looted and burned by rioters as Los Angeles police cars drove past and did absolutely nothing. Mr. Penso—unlike George Bush, Jack Kemp, Bill Clinton, and George Will—learned something. "The cops were there," he told the *Times*, "but they didn't do anything. The only way people can be protected in Los Angeles is if they protect themselves with guns." Some months before the Los Angeles riots, the *Washington Post* carried a story about women and guns, reporting that there are now about 12 million of them across the country, and one of them, a woman named Paxton Quigley in Beverly Hills, a former activist for gun control and now owner of a gun store that offers firearms training to women, told the *Post*, "We cannot depend on anyone to protect us. We must do it ourselves. And the only way is to acquire the firepower it takes to dissuade violent criminals."

Mr. Parisi and Mr. Kent, Miss Quigley and Mr. Penso, have discovered the dirty little secret that can sweep anarcho-tyranny out of office, that anarcho-tyranny flourishes only when citizens surrender their rights and their duties of protecting themselves, assuming responsibility for themselves, and governing themselves and that when the anarcho-tyrants promise to take over and perform these duties themselves, they are uttering a lie that leads to slavery and the jungle at the same time. When anarcho-tyranny flourishes, it protects no one except the elites who fatten on it, and it encourages only the withering of self-government and responsibility. In the movie *The Magnificent Seven*, the bandit leader, played by Eli Wallach, says of the Mexican peasants he is robbing and killing, "If God had not wanted them sheared, he would not have made them sheep." The peasants in the end show that they are not sheep, not by hiring gunfighters and killers to do their fighting for them, which is what we do when we set up the BATF and "police saturation," but by learning how to fight for themselves. Sheep do not need to fight for themselves; they have shepherds who do it for them, until the day comes when the shepherds lead their sheep to slaughter. Only when more Americans learn the lessons these citizens have learned, the lessons the peasants in *The Magnificent Seven* had to learn, and only when they are willing to act on those lessons will anarcho-tyranny itself wither away; only when Americans take back their own streets themselves will they have any streets that are safe. In the words of Lord Byron, "Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow."

Hope

by Laurance Wieder

Give this child judgement, and more children
So that he, and they, can govern
One another, face-to-face, like Moses talking
To the well-spring wished
That all the offspring might be prophets.
That mountain shadow
Lengthened in the wilderness. It touched
Our cities, made the far
Ends of the earth, lands beyond the sea
Remember what life might be
Like, if wanting didn't make us bow to idols,
Power, money, safety, famous
For a time, then ground and scattered by a wind.
If not this one, let someone
Come and lead us to ourselves. We lift our hand
To fend the needless blow,
Will feed the needy then. We show the blossom,
Trunk, limb, fruit, sow
Grain, and knead the bread. We think the sunlight
Gold on the west wall
Is afternoon. Let us know more than can be said.

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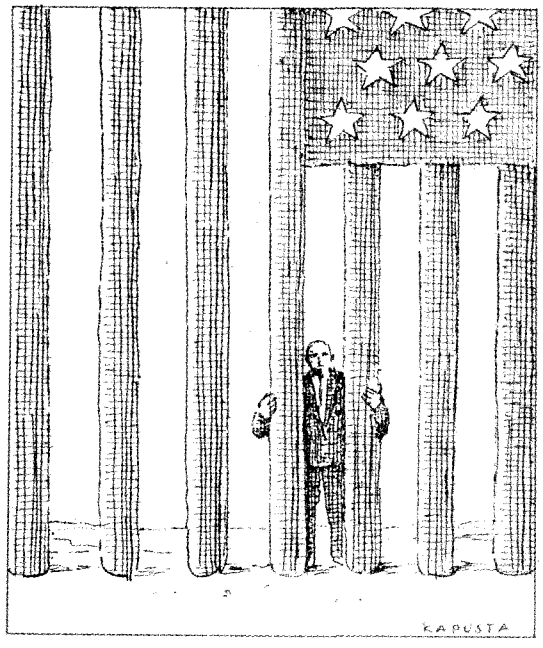
The Puritanism That Dare Not Speak Its Name

by Philip Jenkins



Every society places some kind of restriction on personal conduct, and limitations are usually most visible in the areas of sexual behavior and the use or abuse of particular foods or intoxicants. Restrictions might be formal and legal, perhaps enforced by a specialized morality police or vice squad, or there may be informal social sanctions resulting in stigma or derision for the individual foolhardy enough to indulge his vice in a public context. Often, the informal sanctions serve as an essential preliminary for a codified legal prohibition, either years or decades afterward.

Some societies change slowly with regard to what is considered morally and legally tolerable, while others are subject to far swifter developments in the direction of either more or less permissiveness. America in particular is vulnerable to quite sudden and thoroughgoing reversals that almost amount to revolutions in public morality, and future historians will certainly regard Neo-Puritanism as a hallmark of the times in which we are presently living. However, they will also be struck by the paradox of this particular outbreak in public righteousness, which differs from its predecessors in its conspicuous lack of *overtly* moral or religious foundation—which is not to say that the underlying agendas may not reflect religious assumptions. It is not self-evident that society or the state has either a right or an obligation to interfere in an individual's right to do as he chooses, to go to hell in his own way. When the rhetoric used to justify such interference is as spurious as that currently employed, the presumption has to be that now more than ever, the balance of proof is firmly on those who would restrict or prohibit, rather than on those who merely wish to live their own lives. Is some kind of inverse-proportion law at work here, that morals legislation increases as public morality decreases?

Since the early 1980's, efforts to regulate personal behavior have grown apace in the United States, and changes are evident less in specific legislation than in the general social atmosphere and the imagery of the mass media. The change might be illustrated by a hypothetical time-traveler to our own days from the 1940's, the time of the great war won by a population that habitually used and over-used alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, and benzedrine. In our own world, the traveler would watch films and dramatic presentations in which characters are allowed to smoke only to indicate their moral turpitude, in which anything more than the lightest alcohol use is a clear omen that the plot will shortly address issues of addiction and recovery, and in which a friendly male hand laid upon the shoulder of a female colleague probably betokens a theme of rape, abuse, and harassment. "Flirting," "social drinking," and "light smoking" have all become euphemisms for sinister forms of exploitation or self-destruction. All have gone the way of the "funny drunk," who used to be a stock comic character, rather like the boss with his secretary on his lap: imagine either image as a source of humor today. So far, our visitor would recognize the areas of concern and sensitivity, though not the reasons why they have become so explosively contentious. More difficult altogether would be the novel concern over food and the way in which cholesterol and saturated fats have each in their way become prominent on the roster of deadly sins.

On the news programs, the visitor from the past would learn about the networks of community groups that disseminate the propaganda of the New Puritanism through schools and colleges, seeking to keep all under the age of 21 free of any knowledge or experience of alcoholic drink, regardless of the likelihood that such ignorance is probably the best means of insuring serious overindulgence in later life. He would learn

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of the ceaseless competition to find ever more stringent restrictions to place upon the smoker, to go as far as possible in the direction of outright prohibition without actually banning either the substance or its use. And while amazed at the frankness with which this generation discusses condoms and "safe sex," the time-traveler would also note the presumption that virtually any unprotected extramarital sex is not merely immoral, but a likely ticket to plague and painful death.

Everything would indicate the triumph of a severely puritan ethic, based on the ideas of the sinfulness of pleasure, the collective enforcement of virtue, and the certainty that pleasure leads to severe punishment, if not in hell flames then in the hospital wards treating cancer, heart disease, or AIDS. Moreover, puritan attitudes and assumptions are by no means confined to rubes and backwoodsmen, but have become the orthodoxy of educated elites. Among the medical profession, for example, the visitor from the past would find a radical reversal of the opinions of his own day. While modern doctors have a widespread and well-founded awareness of the vast health benefits of occasional wine-drinking, virtually none dares advocate so pernicious a policy, which would blatantly flout the ideology of temperance. The same doctors know that for an aging community with high cancer rates, the effective relief of pain is to be found only in the extensive use of heroin and morphine, as in every advanced European nation today and in the America of bygone days; but the modern profession refuses to offer the necessary pain relief in sufficient quantities because of the irrational fear of drugs in any guise. Nor will it campaign for governments to relax their savage and cruel prohibitions on such treatment or in any way challenge the self-appointed medical expertise of the drug enforcement bureaucrats. While neither the doctors nor the bureaucrats actually declare that agony is a necessary trial sent by God, their practical conclusions are indistinguishable from the puritan presumption.

Mulling over his distressing observations, the man from the 1940's would have no doubt that America had experienced a religious and moral "Great Awakening" akin to those of the previous century and had almost certainly replaced its republican government with a form of theocracy. This would explain the widespread erotophobia, the Comstockery, the obsession with Temperance, and even the food faddery, which has so often coincided with waves of evangelical reformism. (At least the mid-Victorian revivals bequeathed us the pleasant legacies of graham crackers and Kellogg's cereals.) Our visitor's conclusions would be quite logical, and of course they would be utterly wrong. The would-be mullahs of televangelism have contributed far less to the rise of the New Puritanism than have mainstream and relatively liberal groups, generally acting in the name of "social responsibility" and "the community" and virtually never invoking any supernatural or indeed moral basis for their policies.

The paradox deserves emphasis, as does the contrast with most of recorded history. One of the most plentiful sources available to historians of almost any previous society is the record of attempts to suppress vice and immorality, variously defined but almost always placed in some religious or supernatural context. In the English-speaking world, right up to the late 18th century, most citizens were subject to the complex network of church courts, which had wide powers over questions of both property and morality. Apart from the "obvious" vices such as incest, sodomy, fornication, and adultery, church courts dealt with an amazing range of what we would consider purely private vices or problems, including drunkenness, masturbation, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and religious dissidence. Cases might involve disputes over matters as intimate as a spouse failing to fulfill his or her sexual obligations or children being born a suspiciously short time after wedlock.

Without such explicitly religious warrants ('The Bible says it's wrong'), prohibitions have had to be justified in utilitarian terms that become ever more questionable as definitions of 'harm' are stretched to their limits and beyond.

In 17th-century England or colonial America, such intrusions could readily be justified by the sanction of religion. If a given society was attempting to live up to the role of God's new Israel, then it was justifiable to enforce appropriate standards on every individual in that community. It was obligatory for every neighbor to assist in that effort by whatever means necessary, including what we would describe as eavesdropping or sheer prying. Though justified in metaphysical terms, moral enforcement also had a utilitarian component, in that the moral and natural laws reinforced one another. A society that permitted vice or immorality laid itself open to divine wrath in the form of plague, famine, war, or climatic disaster: the Byzantine Emperor Justinian prohibited homosexuality on the logical grounds that the behavior was well known to incite earthquakes. Whatever we may think about such a worldview and its consequences, it did at least have the virtues of clarity and consistency, and there was a straightforward answer to the question of why certain prohibitions were sought or enforced. God willed it and expressed His views clearly through both His Scriptures and the traditions of His church.

In the last decade, by contrast, the overtly cited justifications for control and prohibition have invariably stressed the utilitarian element of the argument, citing the real or imagined harm of the behavior in question, while the religious foundations of the movement have slipped into the background. This appears to be a thoroughly secularized puritanism. In the early 1980's, the foci of concern involved behavior in which there was at least arguably an element of harm and public danger, drunk driving being the most conspicuous example. MADD ("Mothers Against Drunk Driving") has been one of the most effective pressure groups in modern American history, and its appeal is obvious: opposing the group or the measures it advocates invites the question of whether the critic is either hostile to bereaved mothers or supportive of drunk drivers, scarcely a tenable rhetorical position.

Drunk driving unquestionably can cause real social harm and physical damage, and the consensus on this issue provides

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the basis for what social scientists sometimes call "convergence" or "domain expansion." The terms may sound technical, but the concepts are straightforward enough. In essence, pressure groups take advantage of public acceptance of a known and accepted problem by expanding the scope ("domain") of the problem to include other behaviors that had not hitherto been viewed as dangerous or threatening. However, placing the lesser issues in this threatening context makes them appear sinister and lethal, especially if extreme claims can be buttressed with frightening statistics (and they invariably can). Thus drunk driving is a deadly menace, and so are behaviors associated with this, such as teenage drinking of any kind, or heavy drinking in bars, or perhaps even the sale and advertising of hard liquor of any kind. The domain of the problem expands, and the groundwork is laid for legislative change and for new social attitudes. Our hypothetical man from the 1940's would be sure to believe that he had misread the increasingly common bar notices insisting on a two-drink *maximum*. Shouldn't that read minimum, as in his own day? By no means. The signs generally declare that, to prevent excessive drinking, no customer will be served more than two drinks, and that patrons should not embarrass servers by requesting more. If it is suggested that this might be an intrusion into the liberty and presumed personal responsibility of the individual, the answer is clear: liberty does not extend to causing harm by an act as heinous as drunk driving, and this is "really" part of the same problem.

Under whatever name we choose, the idea of domain expansion goes far toward explaining the construction of contemporary vices and problems, which are consistently portrayed in the context of some generally accepted danger or evil, such as rape, child abuse, or AIDS. It explains why a country music label withdrew a song in which a woman declared, "Sometimes I say no when I mean yes." (The logic runs as follows: Rape is an unquestioned evil. The attitude expressed in the song supports male assumptions that lead to rape. *Ergo* the song is part of the rape problem.) It explains why looking at "dirty pictures" is no longer wrong because it leads to the sin of Onan and the condemnation of God. (The pictures treat women as objects, supporting attitudes that lead to rape. *Ergo*. . . .) Sexual propositioning or teasing is harassment, which is part of the rape problem. Reacting to a hostile *Nation* review of her bizarre and badly argued book on pornography and free speech, feminist ultra Catharine MacKinnon has now declared that the review itself is morally equivalent to a direct sexual assault upon her person. The logic of such arguments is often so contorted that a term like the "New Puritanism" appears woefully inadequate. If historical analogies are sought, why not the New Scholasticism, or Neo-Casuistry?

The banners and prohibitors have their own systematic patterns of logic and rhetoric, but the true motivation of the movement remains uncertain. Why did matters begin to change so sharply in the early 1980's? It might be suggested that there were objective changes that led to the social environment becoming more dangerous and requiring greater caution. AIDS was a newly recognized phenomenon at this time, and the social use of cocaine probably did reach unparalleled heights around 1980, with penetration into upper- and middle-class white circles. It was also about this time that scientific evidence of the deleterious effects of passive smoke inhalation had accumulated to the point where it had to be taken seriously.

On the other hand, it is difficult to avoid the impression that the media at least were already looking for such menaces to terrify people into sobriety. In the two or three years before the immense publicity accorded to AIDS, exactly the same rhetoric had been developed on the subject of herpes ("uncontrollable," "incurable," "imminent epidemic"), and the cocaine panic had already been preceded by a scare campaign over the deluge of nearly pure heroin that was allegedly about to sweep the country in the 1980's. Does anyone today remember either heroin or herpes? Both problems were briefly used as ideological terror weapons to encourage sobriety and sexual restraint before the appearance of the still more effective moral deterrents of AIDS and cocaine. MADD, founded in 1980, achieved an instant respect that had not been accorded to the cranks of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union since the collapse of their favored panacea of Prohibition in 1933.

Rather than a considered or rational response to newly perceived problems, the recent wave of puritanism can more plausibly be seen as a revival of deeply entrenched attitudes within American culture, ideas that are ultimately religious in their origins but that survive vigorously after the decay of the overt religious and moral contexts that would earlier have been used to justify them. Without such explicitly religious warrants ("The Bible says it's wrong"), prohibitions have had to be justified in utilitarian terms that become ever more questionable as definitions of "harm" are stretched to their limits and beyond. Attempts to formulate secular warrants for moral enforcement have led advocates to profoundly antidemocratic and majoritarian conclusions, which neglect long-accepted assumptions about the right of the individual to pursue his or her own moral course.

Observers of contemporary social conditions will find much that is familiar in the circumstances that gave rise to John Stuart Mill's 1859 tract *On Liberty*, which remains the classic defense of individual rights in the face of morality laws. Dur-

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Sardines

by John Nixon, Jr.

A dozen silver corpses,
Embalmed with oil, recline
Inside the sardine tin.
At rest, symmetrical,
Shapely as when they died,
Neatly decapitated,
They lie in state. They all
Appear to take group pride,
Clan satisfaction, in
The ultimate design.

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ing the mid-19th century, there had developed a vigorous movement to use the criminal law to enforce public morality in matters like sexuality, literary censorship, and the consumption of alcohol. Then as now, this puritanical movement originated in the United States but spread throughout the Western world. To reinforce resemblances to our own day, the Victorian plague of righteousness to which Mill was reacting was also fueled in large measure by feminist sentiment and rhetoric.

Though Mill's work is far more complex than a simple attack on attempts to prohibit alcohol, it is the political aspirations of the Temperance movement that provided him with his most effective case-study of majoritarianism. His conclusion is well known: that individuals should have the right to do what they wish, as long as this behavior does not adversely affect others in the community, a distinction that leads Mill to support laws that restrict public drunkenness or that require the registration of poison sales. On the same grounds, this celebrated libertarian might have favored gun control in contemporary conditions, but that is debatable.

What is less well known about *On Liberty* is that the work offers one of the finest accounts available of the psychology of the would-be morality police, a complex of attitudes and prejudices that Mill dissects with superlative skill. He focuses special venom on the doctrine of "social rights," the claim by Temperance advocates that there were secular philosophical grounds for prohibiting behaviors such as the drinking of alcohol. In this view, the private vice of another person "destroys my primary right of security, by constantly creating and stimulating social disorder. It invades my right of equality . . . it impedes my right to free moral and intellectual development." For Mill, this implied a claim "that it is the absolute social right of every individual that every other individual shall act exactly in every respect exactly as he ought: that whosoever fails thereof in the smallest particular violates my social right and entitles me to demand from the legislature the removal of the grievance." The principle is "monstrous": "there is no violation of liberty which it would not justify; it acknowledges no right to any freedom whatever, except perhaps to that of holding opinions in secret, without ever disclosing them." It may be superfluous to add that the "social rights" doctrine has now achieved near-canonical status in American political orthodoxy and is applied ruthlessly not merely to matters of substance abuse but to relations between genders and ethnic groups. Over a century before "political correctness" became a cliché, Mill had isolated and described the virus. "The doctrine ascribes to all mankind a vested interest in each other's moral, intellectual and even physical perfection, to be defined by each claimant according to his own standard."

Mill was addressing not merely the flaws of legislation but "the limits to the authority of *society* over the individual [my emphasis]." He well recognized the stultifying power of social pressures to conform, even if they were not actually codified into law. In our own day, it is a nice question whether the greater dangers to individual liberties come from legislatures and bureaucracies or the pressure groups that demand universal conformity to their particular interests, all in the name of "social rights," "social responsibility," "communitarianism," the "politics of meaning," or whatever Clintonesque cant is devised to impose the fads of the New Puritanism. As the 20th century ends, do we really have to refight the libertarian battles of the mid-19th?

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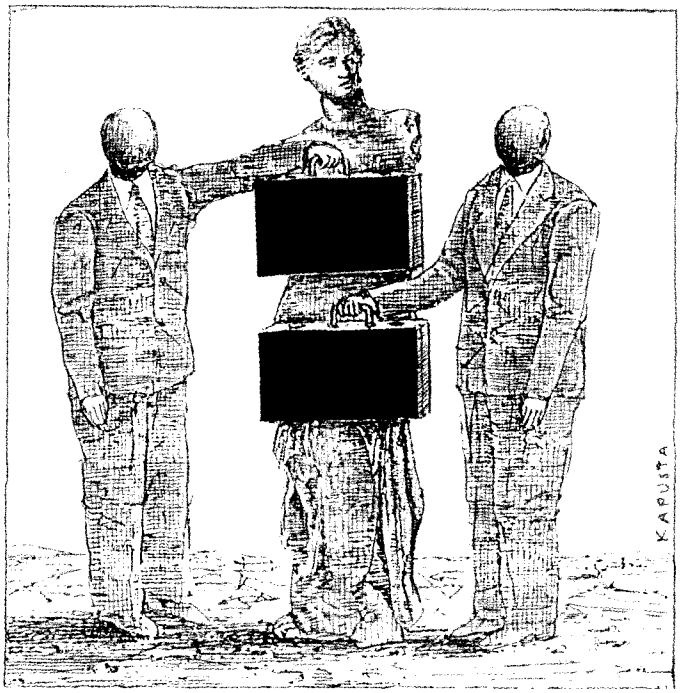
Yahoo Justice

by Sarah J. McCarthy



The Supreme Court that has recently issued its anti-harassment decision sits in the middle of a city under siege. Justices who have pronounced the nation's employers liable for "permitting a hostile environment" to exist in the workplace cannot walk within two blocks of the Supreme Court building without being confronted with the most hostile of environments. Visitors to the nation's capital plan their monument tours around the schedules of street hustlers, muggers, and murderers who own the streets after sunset, impelling Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly to request help from the National Guard. Instead of grappling with the mayhem outside, Congress and the nation's criminal justice system have turned their attentions to something far more manageable—workplace harassment and speech control.

"This decision is only a blow to Yahoos," said Burke Stinson, an AT&T spokesman. Mr. Stinson and other *Fortune* 500 guys who have spent big bucks on shiny new sexual harassment brochures and seminars are not worried. With their fleet of expensive in-house lawyers, they are confident of their ability to negotiate sticky situations. But the Yahoos, many of whom are small business owners and their employees, are about to get it big-time. These business owners, many of whom you might say are works-in-progress, or ripe plums waiting to be picked, are now subject to fines of hundreds of thousands of dollars for "permitting a hostile environment" to exist in their companies.

A Yahoo, says the *American Heritage Dictionary*, is "a crude or brutish person, derived from a race representing humanity at large in *Gulliver's Travels*." The Yahoos I know are the hard-working guys with rough edges who are running the auto body and pizza shops. Though they sometimes look like people from *Deliverance*, they create a sizable chunk of the new jobs in America. They have not had their attitudes adjusted and filtered through the paradigms of Yale, and while they do not yet know it, their personalities have now been criminalized. They are considered by the politically correct and their lawyers to be racist, sexist, homophobes. God help them if they have worked hard, have played by the rules as they understand them, and own a home and business. Yahoos have never heard of the "Hostile Halls" study, a report on sexual harassment in schools. While Senator Kennedy busies himself investigating politically correct minutia like the pig-tail pulling and depantsing that is said to be going on in kindergartens throughout America, businesses are being demoralized and destroyed by armed robbers who come through the back door and lawyers who come through the front.

The employees that the Yahoos hire are a wild and woolly breed themselves. Dean, a chef and manager of a restaurant kitchen on auto-body row, used to laugh wildly as he chased the waitresses with a three-foot-long filet mignon hidden under his apron. The restaurant owner who was now financially responsible for Dean's antics became nervous when he heard tales of how Dean, working alone on the nightshift, hid under tables and grabbed the ankles of the waitress he wanted to date. Scared out of her wits, did she sue? No, but she could have. Instead, she married him. The waitress, a street-smart woman who had flashing eyes and walked with a swagger, was not easily buffaloed by Yahoos.

Charles Hardy, president of Forklift Systems, Inc., in Nashville, Tennessee, is the latest Yahoo to be captured. "You're a woman, what do you know?" Hardy once said to his female manager. Another time he called her "a dumb-ass woman," and eventually, probably to his everlasting amazement, he was dragged before the Supreme Court of the

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United States for creating a hostile work environment. Justice Clarence Thomas did not offer a dissenting opinion, even though he, too, had been dragged through the mud for ten-year-old allegations concerning pornographic movies and a pubic hair on his Coke can.

Crime and violence are rife in the streets, but if there is anything askew in the workplace, an inappropriate pattern of jokes, belligerent sexist comments, too many requests for dates, the government wants to take action and levy the appropriate fines. Senator Kennedy has promised to have the caps removed from these fines, which now range to $300,000 per incident, to provide even bigger jackpots for women who show that they have worked in an abusive environment.

In a recent *New Republic* article, "Defining Deviancy Up," Charles Krauthammer tells of a visit he had from the F.B.I. During a routine background check on a former coworker, Krauthammer was asked if the man whom he had worked beside for two years had ever told any sexist or racist jokes or otherwise shown signs of hidden prejudice. It was then that Krauthammer realized that "insensitive speech had achieved official status as a thought crime."

Thought crimes have become all too prevalent at universities, too. A University of Michigan student who was outlandish enough to state in class that he thought homosexuality is an illness was forced to attend a formal university hearing in a room where free thought and free speech were once held in high regard and was charged with harassment based on sexual orientation. In the not-too-distant past it was assumed that the answer to erroneous or offensive speech was more speech, especially in our institutions of higher learning. If a fundamentalist Christian student believes that homosexuality is an illness, should his opinion not be freely stated and freely refuted? When did we suspend the rights of presumed racists, sexists, and homophobes? To suppress speech insures that change at the attitudinal level will not occur, that prejudices will go underground, hidden and unchallenged.

Though profound censorship issues underlie hate speech and hostile environment laws, the recent Supreme Court harassment ruling came down fast and unanimous and without apparent controversy. "It is as simple as requiring everyone on the job to treat everyone with decency and respect," editorialized the *Washington Post*. How incredibly simple. Why didn't we think of this before? If such a law is good for the workplace, why could it not be passed for the whole nation, requiring everyone to treat each other with decency and respect at all times of the day or night? We all could have the fundamental right, as Carol Moseley-Braun argued in the Senate, to an environment free from insult. If such a law were passed, we could eliminate divorce and crime in the streets. We could have peace at home and abroad. In reality, Congress could never enact a freedom-from-a-hostile-environment law for the nation at large because the enforcement of such a law would entail the establishment of a police state. Distaste for anything resembling a police state partially explains the impotence of the criminal justice system in the face of the near-anarchy that is occurring on our nation's streets. If hostile environment laws are so abhorrent for the nation at large, why do we readily embrace them for the workplace?

Until recently, workplace cultures evolved freely from within. The type of business and the values and personalities of the owners, managers, and employees determined the social relations that occurred. Some businesses permitted interoffice dating, some did not. Bars and restaurants did not require the same level of decorum as, say, a law office or a medical facility. Temperamental immigrant chefs could bellow and swear, and whoever could tolerate them would stay.

Now it is different. Social interactions, once the province of

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Moe Howard Considers the Death of His Brother, Curly

by Jim Henley

In the last scene we used you in—a sight gag,
you had lost speech—we posed you in a train,
in the smoking car, snoring like a kid
will get a mind to snort, until his parents
get a mind to smack him. A hat pulled low
framed your famous face. Then my character
yanked it away in annoyance, and revealed
the straight brown hair you were now free to grow.

With all the pokes, pops, kicks, cream pies, and barks
in front of stage lights and kleig lights, the coffee jags
on dark roads between towns, flop sweat in green rooms,
and stray fans' *nyuck nyuck nyucks* and wild eye gouges
in banks and restaurants, no wonder the stupid
body decided to get in on the act.
No wonder, untrained in slapstick, it went too far.
Those six years in the Actors' Home your stare
was like a bad audience in Iowa, broken
by the random pratfalls of successive strokes.

I'd often want to grab your nose on visits,
beep like a car, and bring my other fist
down in the arc we'd worked out in rehearsals,
to yank the sad-sack anger of yours free.
Had you been all there, you would have punkslapped
Death
silly. But long before that smoker scene
we'd become props. As sure as some damn mime
creates a space, our very bodies broadcast,
"Not to be taken seriously." So
you drank more than you should have, until your
bloodstream
forgot its lines one night of its long tour.

Mom always lectured us on the distinction
between laughing with and at, a difference we split.
I'd like to be God. I'd set you at the gate
and judge the rubes by whether they could see
the show was over. If they couldn't—well,
I know where all the player pianos went.
Let's just say nobody has tuned them lately.

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Miss Manners, can easily become a federal case. Workplace behavior standards are to be enforced from the outside, with the boss as the designated censor. As Wayne state law professor Kingsly Brown points out, "You've got employers censoring workers' speech out of fear of being held liable by the government. It is still censorship, even if the mechanism is a civil action by private parties."

Charles Krauthammer asks in the *New Republic*:

> How to cope with the explosion of real deviancy? One way is denial. . . . Another strategy is distraction: defining deviancy up creates brand new deviancies that we can now go off and fight that distracts us from real deviancy and gives us the feeling that, despite the murder and mayhem and madness around us, we are really preserving and policing our norms. . . . Defining deviancy up creates a whole new universe of behaviors to police, and—a bonus—a higher class of offender. More malleable, too: the guilt-ridden bourgeois, the vulnerable college student is a far easier object of social control than the hardened criminal or the raving lunatic.

Our government has done to employers what sexual harassers do to women—turn their workplace into a hostile environment. The litigious minefield that the boss must walk can seem as fraught with danger as the streets outside. Outside, the criminals run the show. Inside the workplace, and inside the manager's head, the litigious kooks are in charge. He who offends the most dignified and prudish among us can lose his job, or his business. He who is politically incorrect has lost his right to free speech. The prim elite have taken control.

"What I'm seeing lately is that companies are overreacting," says Ellen Wagner, attorney and author, in *Fortune* magazine: "Accusers are believed on the basis of very little evidence or none at all. And the ultimate punishment, termination, is a first resort rather than a last one." "As for men," says Anne B. Fisher in *Fortune*, "the majority of whom wouldn't dream of harassing anybody, they are terrified of being falsely accused."

Employers need also be wary of the flip side of the coin, being sued for wrongful discharge if they fire someone who is innocent of alleged harassment. In contradiction to AT&T's spokesman, who implied that only Yahoos are worried, *Investor's Business Daily* reports that in the current sexual harassment minefield both male and female managers are becoming "confused and skittish." Nine out of ten *Fortune* 500 companies report that they have been sued for harassment, at an "average cost of $6.7 million per year to a large employer."

Allowing the government to micromanage verbal behavior between men and women in the workplace gives it enormous power, generating widespread, stifling effects of major proportion due to the sheer numbers of people the laws effect. To regulate speech between women and men at work is not the same as monitoring the speech of a tiny hate cult like the skinheads. We have empowered the government to regulate the speech of most of the people in America for half of their waking hours.

A man coming out of a bad marriage may express anger and bitterness to a coworker friend. Should his emotional venting and excessive generalizing about women be considered a prejudice against women, an appropriate reason for the F.B.I. or other thought police to derail his career? Women and blacks and what happens to them are among the major issues affecting our culture. We simply cannot squelch dialogue at this point, putting a permanent gag rule on doubts, fears, anger, questions, or stupid statements regarding blacks or women. Backlash and arrested development will be the inevitable results of such social protectionism. Is it ever possible for white Americans to express questions or anger about the epidemic of black crime, particularly if they have been personally victimized by it, and not be presumed a racist? One can only wonder how much damage has been done by the muzzling of free discussion about the collapse of the black family and related issues over the last 30 years. As David Boldt, editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, said, "I have this vision of America, with all 250 million of us standing up to our chins in sewage and everyone's saying, 'Don't make waves!'"

What should a free society that has always celebrated diversity do with outspoken employers like Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones, Don Rickles, Andy Rooney, Marge Schott, Spike Lee, Howard Stern, Rush Limbaugh, lesbian bookstore owners, Whoopi Goldberg, Hooters Restaurant, Jimmy the Greek, or feminist bar owners? Under current law, could a macho rebel like Axl Rose of Guns N' Roses feel safe hiring a woman with the delicate demeanor of, say, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg? Could people like them work together without one or the other being financially or emotionally damaged? Perhaps a person like her would feel unnerved and offended by a person as rude and crude as him. Perhaps he would feel unbearably tense and claustrophobic in the presence of someone as prim and dignified as she. In the past, we have always negotiated such interactions as free-wheeling adults without the suffocating threat of a personal injury attorney breathing down our necks. We have now become a nation of eggshell-walkers.

And what about women and blacks, who are the primary intended beneficiaries of anti-harassment laws—what effect do these laws have on them? Former President of the National Organization for Women, Karen DeCrow, said recently in *USA Today*: "I have begun to worry about this younger generation of feminists. The New Puritanism is frightening. What we had in mind 25 years ago was not a New Puritanism, but freeing women from being eternal children." The image and legal status of women as perpetual victims who need special protection from offensive speech will be a hindrance to the hiring and advancement of women. Men who have never before had a reason to discriminate against women now have one—the fear of being fired, falsely accused, or sued. For every woman who wins a personal injury jackpot, there will be thousands who will not be hired or promoted due to employers who are paranoid about lawsuits or accusations. How many employers will quietly decide against hiring a woman to send on the road with the company's best and most aggressive salesman? How many bar owners or construction managers, faced with a female applicant, will feel secure that their work environment can be guaranteed free of sexually offensive speech? Those who may have previously been motivated to hire women may look at current punitive damage penalties and quietly decide that hiring a woman is not worth the risk.

Women would become stronger and less segregated from the male club if they would develop the assertiveness skills to outwit, outcharm, outmaneuver, and outwisecrack workplace harassers. Ideally, a sexist boss or coworker can be circumvented or conquered like any other workplace obstacle, increasing a

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woman's self-esteem and empowerment. If such is not the case, and a hostile workplace environment becomes insurmountable, workers should have access to outside counselors with whom the involved parties could be required to resolve their conflicts. The company could be required to pay for counseling or mediation, but such payments would be far less threatening to the employer and more productive than punitive damage awards. Conflict resolution, rather than punishment, should be the primary focus of such mediation. The lottery-size incentives to sue a boss would disappear if complaints did not result in huge payoffs. With the continuing decline of labor unions, workers in businesses large and small could benefit from a professional conflict resolution process that would not be limited to racial, sexual, or religious victims but would be available to anyone involved in serious workplace disputes. Refusal to cooperate could result in the employer receiving an escalating series of fines, but these financial penalties would come at the end of the process, not as the first volley.

There is faulty logic and basic unfairness in laws that protect only particular groups from hostile environment and speech crime laws. A society that makes Polish and dumb-blond jokes an actionable offense should not fall off its chair when lawyers, exercising flawless logic, claim that hatred and prejudice have grown against them to the degree that they, too, are now victims. Harvey Saferstein, president of the California Bar and the greatest living example of chutzpah run amok, has proposed that lawyer-bashing be designated a hate crime. Yes, all of the theater-goers who cheered wildly when the *Jurassic Park* dinosaur ate the lawyer could be charged with hate speech. Shakespeare could be purged from the schools for advocating that we kill all the lawyers.

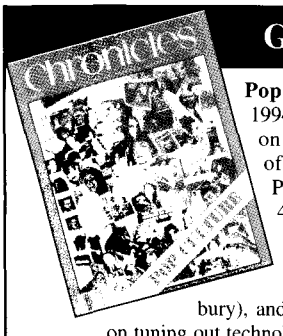
In a nation where it sometimes seems that lawsuits are one of our few growth industries, it is dismaying to see the Supreme Court treat the nations' employers with (to borrow a legal phrase) such callous disregard. It is disappointing to see that a law that threatens freedom of expression is so quickly given unanimous approval by the Supreme Court. Judge Scalia writes, "As a practical matter, today's holding (on the sexual harassment case of Forklift Systems) lets virtually unguided juries decide whether sex-related conduct engaged in by (or permitted by) an employer is egregious enough to warrant an award of damages."

Leaving such complex issues in the hands of "unguided juries" who will decide guilt or innocence is alarming only to those who must pick up the tab. Juries will not receive a definition of what constitutes a hostile environment because the Justices have not devised one. The Supreme Court will be responsible for nothing so much as a definition of the crime for which it so cavalierly punishes the nation's employers.

Congress, too, has limited its responsibility, exempting itself from the punitive damage penalties it has legislated for the private sector. If a congressman "permits a hostile environment" to exist, no one will confiscate his house.

The 1991 Civil Rights Law, which for the first time allows punitive damages for permitting a hostile work environment, is too vague and open-ended, too ambiguous, too fluid, and too punitive. It will have a chilling effect on creativity, free speech, and the advancement of women in the workplace. It will benefit no one except personal injury attorneys and a few jackpot winners. ©

GREAT TOPICS



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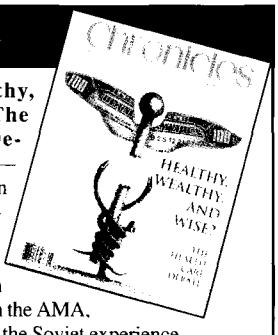
"I Don't Hate the South"—May 1994—M.E. Bradford on Donald Davidson. Fred Chappell on the writer's responsibility, J.O. Tate on the film *Gettysburg*, and William Pratt on Andrew Lytle. Plus Thomas Fleming on Southern chauvinism and Samuel Francis on the anniversary of *Brown* v. *The Board of Education*.

GREAT ISSUES



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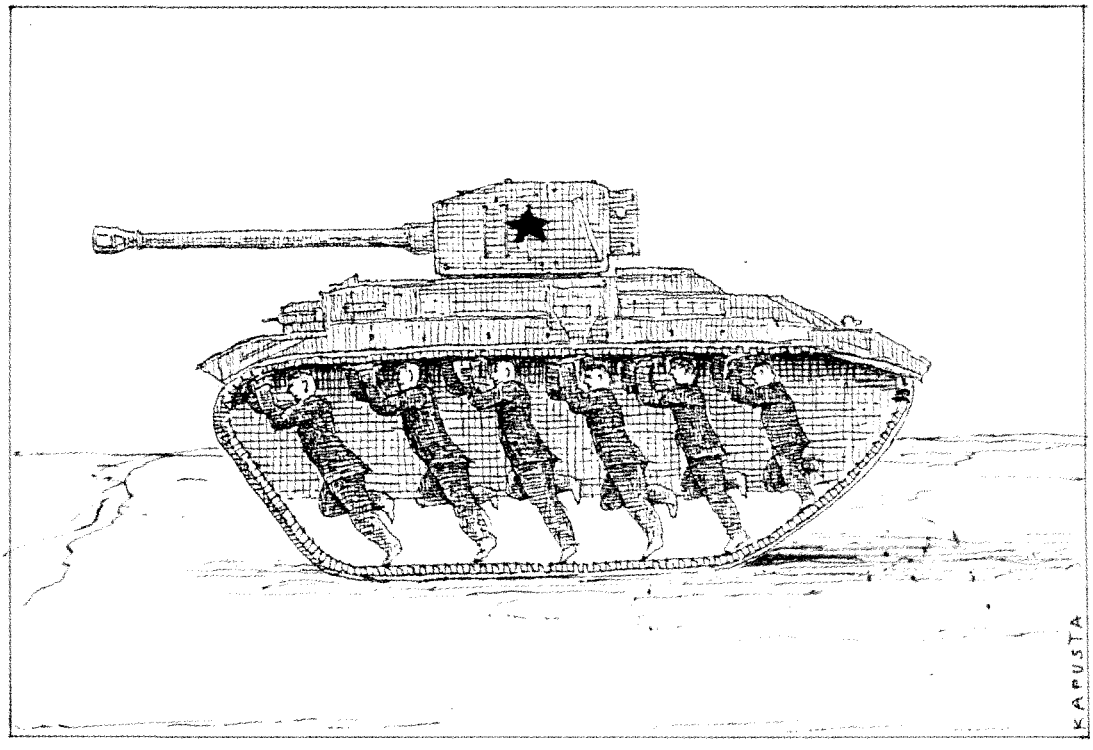
The Rise of the Red-Browns

by Wayne Allensworth

"Blood and revenge are hammering in my head."
—William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*



The Last Drive to the South
by Vladimir Zhirinovsky
Moscow: Pisatel; 143 pp.

◆

In his 1990 pamphlet "How to Revitalize Russia," Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn wrote, "When our fathers and grandfathers threw down their weapons during a deadly war [World War I], deserting the front in order to plunder their neighbor at home, they in effect *made a choice* [his italics] for us, with consequences for one century so far, but who knows, maybe for two." Thus the chaos that made the Bolshevik coup possible was set in motion by the decision of Russian peasant-soldiers to abandon the front and seize the land of their more prosperous countrymen. The great writer-philosopher calls on Russia to seek her national revival first through personal repentance, for, in his view, Russia's travails are not the result of blind historical forces, nor are they wholly caused by the machinations of internal and external enemies, but are chiefly the fruit of the decisions and actions of individual Russians.

Solzhenitsyn is a Russian nationalist. He sees his country reborn within the framework of her own history and traditions, but he is also a practicing Christian who recognizes that the sin of Adam is also the sin of Russians. To nationalists of Solzhenitsyn's persuasion, the Russian nation is an extended family, connected by blood, common experience, and history. The nation is not an ideology, separate from the people themselves, and these nationalists do not indulge in what Conor Cruise O'Brien has called the "deification" of the nation, a singularly modern phenomenon. Russia is not a savior or messiah for the world (though she may play a special role in it), because, for these nationalists, Christ will suffice.

But for others, Russian nationalism replaces religious faith. Russia, reduced to an abstraction, is their god and, as the greatest and most virtuous force in human history, will play the messianic role of the world's savior, leading mankind to

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"world peace," or socialism, by whatever means are necessary to fulfill a national destiny made inevitable by the dialectics of history. It is unimportant whether they call themselves "patriots" or "communists," whether they see Lenin or Peter the Great as a demi-god, for all nationalists of this stripe see the history of the nation as a continuous progression, under czars and commissars. Polish dissident Adam Michnik has called nationalism the "final stage" of communism, and the extremist coalition of "red-browns," triumphant in Russia's December elections, is not misnamed.

Vladimir Zhirinovsky has been the most notable beneficiary of the red-brown triumph. He is colorful, brash, and outrageous. His party's strong showing in the December elections should help to dispense with the once widely held image of him as a clown and buffoon, a man not to be taken seriously. If that did not, then his recently published autobiography, *The Last Drive to the South*, should. Zhirinovsky is a man with a plan, which, according to his book, he has mulled over for some time. Zhirinovsky writes that, even as a "small boy," he was aware of "something great," an "ultimate idea," which was to guide him to great "heights." He felt that he would lead Russia to the end point of her history, the "resolution" of her "global task," a task that he eventually identified as her last "great historical mission," a mission which would usher in a period of world peace and stability.

The historical process in which Zhirinovsky sees himself as instrumental will reach its culmination *via* the "drive to the south," a Russian *Blitzkrieg* that will expand the borders of the Russian imperium to the shores of the Indian Ocean. Russia's southern border, now racked by conflict, will once and for all time be secured by the "pacification" of the barbaric Georgians, Azeris, Turks, Iranians, and Afghans. Thus will Russia (and the world) be saved from the "Islamic threat," thus will she resist being "driven into the tundra" where "nothing can breathe and develop." Russia will be freed of the threat of extinction inherent in her existence in an "unviable region," meaning the northern latitudes where a truncated Russia is confined. She will gain a warm-water "platform," an access to the world's markets by the hospitable waters of the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. Russia's allies India and Iraq (this explains Zhirinovsky's personal friendship with Saddam Hussein and his party's willingness to send "volunteers" to help defend this ally whenever America threatens him) will act as guardians of Russia's flanks, and the world will naturally be divided into spheres of influence by the great powers, ensuring stability and world peace in the 21st century.

"I dream of Russian soldiers washing their boots in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and switching to summer uniforms forever," he writes. Russia will thereby "insure stability throughout our region," which will serve "the world community as a whole." The future Russia will "grow rich" as a result of "the north" matching its "heavy industry" with the "raw materials" of "the south."

Zhirinovsky acknowledges some rough spots on the way to the millennium, since there will naturally be resistance, and once the "drive" is an accomplished fact, part of the south's population "will migrate to the north in a quest for work. Unfortunately, some of it will die because the south does not currently have sufficient medicines." This unpleasantness, in Zhirinovsky's eyes, is merely a phase of "natural survival, assimilation, and adaptation" on the way to a "world order" based upon his notion of spheres of influence, which, in the era of the global economy, will establish a true "economic order," thus rationalizing world affairs.

The last drive to the south, the consolidationist phase of Zhirinovsky's Grand Vision, will be preceded by the restoration of the Russian Empire within boundaries similar to those under the imperial regime, a restoration whose first cause is the humiliation that the Russian people have experienced since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Indeed, the grand themes of *The Last Drive to the South* are humiliation, restoration, and consolidation. These themes are linked to the historical process that will culminate in the "last drive": humiliation giving way in the short term to restoration, while in the long term consolidation will bring prosperity and tranquillity.

In *The Last Drive to the South*, Zhirinovsky links his life and fate to the future of the Russian nation: his own humiliation is a metaphor for the humiliation of all Russians. He repeatedly reminds his readers of the crushing poverty he was raised in, of the discrimination he claims he experienced at the hands of ethnic minorities, of the dull teachers (usually Jews) who deliberately blocked the advancement of a bright but overly independent student, of the hidebound bureaucrats who did not recognize or appreciate his intelligence and potential, and of the "toadies" who

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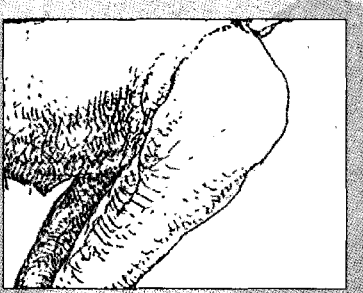

ZHIRINOVSKY ON THE U.N.

"Why do we Europeans need an international organization like the United Nations? It is a collection of states from the age of the ox cart. Africa, Latin America, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia—why should I be interested in their problems? They are at the other end of the earth."

—from an interview with Vladimir Zhirinovsky conducted by a CHASA Moscow news correspondent.

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denounced him to the watchdogs of ideological purity. Zhirinovsky lets the people know he is one of them. He is a man who makes visceral connections with his audience when he tells them: "For decades you have been deceived, made fools of and stuffed full of various dogmas. . . . I shall represent you . . . those of you who received, and still receive in these terrible years, only 200 rubles and live in two-room apartments. . . . You are made to do nothing but work—work so that those at the top get rich."

As Zhirinovsky has suffered at the hands of jealous plotters and fools who could not see his potential for leadership, so Russia has suffered at the hands of a world that not only does not appreciate her greatness and the historic role she plays in world history (Russia saved the world from the Mongols and the Turks, from Napoleon and Hitler, but the world is not grateful) but that also actively seeks her subjugation. In Zhirinovsky's discourse, external enemies (usually Jews and Western capitalists) have allied with internal collaborators (Jews and the current Russian government) in a plot to turn Russia into a Western colony, a colonization that may well result in the ultimate extinction of the Russian people. "Nobody will help Russia," writes Zhirinovsky. "Gorbachev and Yeltsin made all kinds of concessions to the West, the United States, . . . [and] Israel. And what did they get for it? Nothing."

As Russia's humiliation is linked to Zhirinovsky's own personal humiliation, so the restoration of the Russian Empire and the consolidation of her gains (which will be reflected in the restoration of jobs and security through a revitalization of the military-industrial complex and a new era of prosperity to be realized following the drive to the south) are contingent on Zhirinovsky's personal political fortunes. Indeed, he has often warned the Russian electorate, "If I do not win the elections, I will not be the loser. You, the inhabitants of Russia, will be the losers."

Though Zhirinovsky's vision of the drive to the south is his own specific prescription for healing what ails the Russian bear, the worldview he subscribes to is widely held among red-brown partisans. In the July 3, 1993, edition of *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, a bastion of national bolshevism among Russian newspapers, Russian Communist Party Chairman Gennady Zyuganov published a lengthy article entitled "The Russian Question," in which he discussed the development of an "ideology of national rebirth" as a means of "snatching the [political] initiative out of the hands of those who hate Russia." Zyuganov wrote of the necessity of explaining to the "masses" just "who is destroying Russia, how this is being done and why." The answer was predictable: "[The West] is afraid of our might as a world power. It has a self-interest in weakening, dismembering, and, if possible, enslaving Russia." These efforts to enslave Russia, "over a period of more than a thousand years," are the "maniacal" work of "secret political societies, religious sects, and mystical dogmas." *Sovetskaya Rossiya* once ran a front-page photo, mocked up in the best *National Enquirer* manner, purporting to show Boris Yeltsin in Masonic regalia.

One of the genetic characteristics of the particular brand of nationalism that Zhirinovsky and Zyuganov represent is its dualism. If Russia represents the apex of world historical development, and the Russian nation (this is often posed in racialist terms) the highest stage of human evolution—with an historical mission to fulfill, a mission that may entail the subjugation of inferior nations—then it stands to reason that the evil forces of inferior Western civilization would seek to undermine and destroy her.

Zhirinovsky's nationalism is the nationalism of victimology, the nationalism of scapegoating, the self-pitying nationalism of those who blame everyone but themselves for the troubles of their country. It is a nationalism for cowards, for people whose identity can be defined only in terms of victimhood. This brand of nationalism is not specific to Russia, anymore than its preoccupation with conspiracy theories is. The litany of scapegoating, of self-pity and self-glorification, of conspiracy theories and grand millennial schemes is redolent of Hitler's speeches, of the puffed-up, posturing quality of Mussolini's diatribes, of the paranoia of Stalin's witch-hunts, and of the hate-mongering on our own shores, from the wild Afrocentrists and Jew-baiting black nationalists. Regardless of whether Zhirinovsky becomes Russia's leader, the worldview evident in *The Last Drive to the South* reveals much about our potential saviors of the world, who are all too abundant in contemporary Russia. ☙

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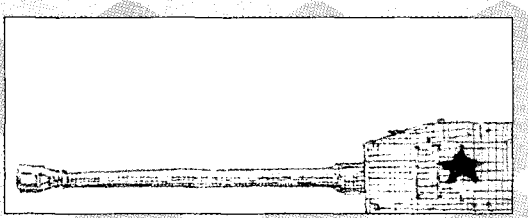

ZHIRINOVSKY, VLADIMIR ZHIRINOVSKY

"Vladimir Zhirinovsky roams over a map of the world using a pen light. This is a miniature version of the terrible 'Elipton' weapon with which the chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party is frightening the world. The ballpoint-pen-like instrument has three buttons. If you press the first button, the laser beam acts as a pointer. If you press the second, the other person will collapse unconscious on the floor within three seconds. If you press the third button, you can remove your target from the land of the living. . . .

[Zhirinovsky says:] 'It is my personal weapon. It completely destroys buildings and people, not by fire, but with a laser beam that destroys all targets. . . . Of course [I can destroy the world with this weapon], but I do not want to. It is important that we possess such a weapon. If any danger threatens us, in the case of extreme necessity there is nothing strange about us using it in certain regions—for defense.'"

—from an interview with Zhirinovsky conducted by a CHASA Moscow news correspondent.

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Real Plain Speaking

by Clyde Wilson

George Wallace: American Populist
by Stephan Lesher
Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley; 320 pp., $29.95

◆

In a healthy society people live with a wide time frame. They know and make use of the experience of their forebears. They build houses and plant trees that will be enjoyed by their descendants. Among the many things which our Founding Fathers took for granted but which we have lost was a social fabric in which people knew the character, at least the public character, of their leaders in depth. Public esteem was a reward of real, remembered services to the commonwealth, not of media celebrity or promises of payoffs.

Thus, in a healthy society, people would know that George Bush, running for the Senate in Texas in 1964, claimed to oppose the Civil Rights Act of that year, although this stance belied his constant support for "civil rights" bills both before and after. People would have understood that Bush was in the habit of lying on the hustings to obtain office, and no one over the age of 13 would have believed him in 1988 when he promised not to raise taxes and to bear down on thugs. Had we anything but the shortest memory, we would have known that he would likely do the opposite—raise taxes and persecute policemen for violating the "rights" of thugs.

Of course, it was not in the interest of either his opponents or the media to point out the lie, because as mutual members of the ruling class they were even more committed than Bush was to raising taxes and coddling criminals. Indeed, they attacked Bush not for making false promises to the American people but for dividing the common front of the Establishment by even discussing forbidden policy alternatives. The people had little choice but to take the lesser evil. Routinely, we accept the most preposterous claims by public figures because the frame of reference of our public discourse is so short.

The other side of the unconsciousness of history is the neglect of posterity: American public discourse, which suffers from terminal infantilism, is carried on as if posterity did not exist. It does not matter if we pile up an unpayable debt (which our descendants will have every moral right and practical incentive to repudiate), nor do we even consider whether it will really be a good thing if those descendants have to live in a society dominated by Mexicans and Chinese.

These reflections are prompted by the first full-scale biography of George Wallace, as well as by a recognition of how completely Wallace has dropped from public consciousness. The biography is a good one, not sympathetic but balanced and knowledgeable. Lesher is a liberal—but also an experienced and honest reporter who has covered Wallace closely for much of the past 35 years. He has not relied solely on his own observations, however, but has done solid historical research as well, making his book as thorough a biography as we are likely to have. Not the least of its virtues is a documented, blow-by-blow account of the civil rights upheavals of the 1960's, a subject that so far has been recounted only as mythology and that badly needs detached historical examination. The author has a feel for Wallace's Scotch-Irish forebears, Reconstruction, and the beleaguered rural life of the South in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is therefore in a position to appreciate the roots of American populism and George Wallace himself as its representative.

Lesher makes large and, I believe, well-founded claims for Wallace's importance. "Wallace is the most influential loser in modern American politics. . . . Every President from Nixon to Clinton based his successful campaign on some key elements from the Wallace political canon. . . . From 1968 to 1992 no person was elected President without clearly embracing and articulating (though not necessarily implementing) the Wallace issues." Accepting this argument requires an effective memory of the tepidness of Republican discourse prior to the feisty little governor of Alabama's dashing foray into the northern primaries in 1964. In that day, no Republican would touch the "populist" issues of crime, busing, welfare, "family values"—since doing so was regarded as treasonous consorting with the enemy. (Wallace's other issues, including the over-concentration of wealth and the excessive power of foreign capital, are just beginning to be addressed.)

Prior to Wallace's dramatic appearance, so far as the national public discourse was concerned, the racial problems of the United States were confined to the South. The public understanding was limited to a view of noble Democratic and Republican statesmen passing legislation intended to force the South into rising to the impeccable standard of social justice enjoyed by the rest of the country. Wallace's campaigns, along with the Watts riots, revealed that hypocrisy. It was the Wallace Democrats who made Ronald Reagan President and who sent George Bush back to Texas. Lest we forget the importance of George Wallace at the apex of his career (and students entering college now were born after he was shot and after the McGovern campaign), it is necessary to recall some figures from the Democratic primaries in 1972: Michigan—Wallace 51 percent, McGovern 27 percent, Humphrey 16 percent; Maryland—Wallace 39 percent, Humphrey 27 percent, McGovern 22 percent.

Wallace's impact is not surprising. It takes a heroic and intelligent outsider to change the public discourse and bring focus to real issues, always. Ruling-class politicians say only what it is already known to be safe to say. Such is "the genius of American politics." The interest of Establishment politicians is never in the truth, never in effective policy; it is, first, in maintaining their own power, and, second, in looking after the undiscussed interests of those who keep the brown bags full of cash.

Not only liberals but also Republican conservatives conducted one of the nastiest campaigns in American history against Wallace. He was, for instance, the victim of Nixon's dirty tricks as much as or more than those of McGovern. I well remember how *National Review* pulled out all the stops to prevent defection from Republicans to Wallace. Wallace was a conservative only on social issues, wrote that perspicative journal; he was a populist and socialist on eco-

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nomic issues! After all, his state actually spent money on welfare and sought federal dollars! As if there was a single Republican governor, congressman, or presidential contender who did not do exactly the same. And all in defense of the Nixon regime of price controls and affirmative action.

From this juncture, looking over the evidence of that day, it is clear that what the left and right establishments feared was not George Wallace, socialism, or racism. What they feared was the American people. As Wallace put it in 1972: "When the government tries to force masses of people against their will to conform to certain guidelines involving their children, their taxes, their labor unions, their property, it would have been a phenomenon if they had not given vent to their antagonism and anger at this drive to make everyone conform to what the pseudo-intellectual thought the average citizen should conform to." Or, as he said on another occasion: "When politicians succumb to anarchists in the street, then they haven't got what it takes to lead us out of the morass." What he said then is still true, and no one has said it any better since.

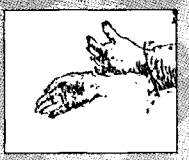
This is populism. It is a threat to the subsidies, tariffs, and contracts that Big Business defines as "free enterprise" (the only kind of free enterprise the Republican Party has ever defended). It claims that farmers and labor want a fair shake, a level field, so it is "socialism" (the only kind of socialism the Republican Party has ever opposed). Populism is also a threat to the most hallowed of all American values: respectability. America, which is nothing if it is not a land of "pseudo-intellectuals," is governed by fashion. No issue in America is ever considered on its truth or falsehood, only on whether the "right people" find it acceptable or unacceptable. Our Founding Fathers understood that patriotism and justice would often be limited by self-interest, ambition, stupidity, and demagoguery. They could not imagine a situation in which millions were so lacking in ordinary firmness of character that they would be unable even to consider a question of truth and justice. No one wants to say something that is not in fashion. Wallace's astounding and colorful candor had to be put down.

His was a candor that has not since been equaled, though Pat Buchanan perhaps came close—and received a similar response. I still remember with pleasure how Wallace refused to be defined and confined by the media but insisted on and succeeded in making his own points. My favorite of many is the occasion on which an arrogant Republican fouled the Senate chamber with the accusation that Wallace was mentally disturbed, basing it upon the small veteran's disability pension that Wallace received. Said Wallace: "I receive 10 percent disability for a nervous condition caused by being shot at by Japanese airplanes and anti-aircraft guns in combat missions during World War II. To what does Senator Morse attribute his condition?"

What American has paid a higher price than Wallace for his public courage? Two decades of invalidism and pain. Lesher recounts fully Wallace's recantation of white supremacy, his deliberate efforts at reconciliation with the black people of his state and of the country at large. As he rightly observes: "It was supremely ironic that as Wallace and the South moved closer to the goal of racial reconciliation, much of America was turning in the other direction." But Lesher, I fear, does not really know the true explanation for this irony. It is not that the South, for the first time in its four centuries of history, has been converted to the abstract ideology of equality. It is, rather, that the South, unlike modern America, is still predominantly a Christian society.

Clyde Wilson is a professor of American history at the University of South Carolina.

LIBERAL ARTS



SPIELBERG'S FIB

A leading Polish Roman Catholic newspaper sharply criticized the film *Schindler's List*, reported the *Christian News* last March. The Church-backed daily *Slowo: Dziennik Katolicki* accused director Steven Spielberg of falsifying the historical record of Polish-Jewish relations.

The paper argued that the film had "wrongly idealized" the German businessman Oskar Schindler, who saved hundreds of Jews from Nazi concentration camps by giving them work in his Krakow factory. "The film portrays Schindler as a selfless actor in the Holocaust drama," the Polish daily said. "However, Spielberg seems to have been quite oblivious to certain important facts from Schindler's prewar past." Jewish survivors of the war have testified that Schindler accepted large payments in diamonds for rescuing them.

Moreover, claimed *Slowo: Dziennik Katolicki*, at the end of the film "we are informed that only 4,000 Jews currently live in Poland, and that in comparison the generation of Jews saved by Schindler numbered 6,000. It suggests that this one good German rescued more Jews than all the Poles put together."

Politics and Civilization

by Harold O.J. Brown

The Wrath of Nations: Civilizations and the Furies of Nationalism
by William Pfaff
New York: Simon & Schuster;
256 pp., $22.00

◆

William Pfaff, syndicated political columnist for the *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), is probably the most perceptive writer in the world today on European affairs, particularly as they affect and are affected by American policy. He is not as much of a political philosopher as some others, like Jacques Ellul and the late Bertrand de Jouvenel, but he has an amazingly detailed grasp of history spanning continents and mil-

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lennia nevertheless.

Pfaff is particularly alert to all aspects of the political situation in Germany and Central Europe. He has a high appreciation of the value of the multinational societies that we smashed in World War I: Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. His thesis is that nationalism is a phenomenon of recent origin, having first arisen in England and France in the course of the Hundred Years War. In the history of Europe, according to Pfaff, nationalism has frequently been a disruptive and destructive force, most recently in the breakup of what used to be Yugoslavia.

Pfaff thinks that America's naive commitment to democracy as we understand it and to national self-determination has caused it to make frequent blunders whose effects on the peace of nations will be far-reaching. The principle of self-determination, which was so exalted by Woodrow Wilson during and after World War I, required the breakup of what had been two fairly harmonious societies in the prewar period, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, and caused insoluble problems to arise across Southeastern Europe, ultimately leading to World War II. The mixing and intermingling of population groups in Central and Eastern Europe makes it impossible to draw boundaries along nationalistic lines with any degree of equity; until now, all attempts to do so have failed. The dismal situation in the former Yugoslavia is only the most dramatic illustration of this failure, and serious tensions will continue to exist throughout Eastern Europe and the former U.S.S.R. Although he devotes less attention to Africa and Asia, Pfaff draws our attention to the problems of nationalism—often artificial and imported from the West—on those continents as well.

None of the Asian countries was a nation in the nationalist sense until it encountered Europeans. Japan was the first to understand and adopt nationalistic principles, which permitted the smaller nation to defeat both China and Russia at the turn of the century and which tempted it to its unsuccessful challenge to the United States in World War II. Japan's nationalistic fervor, directed into commercial rivalry since the war, has given her much of the success that she failed to obtain by force of arms.

In Europe, after the nationalistic fragmentation that followed World War I, two or three major attempts at internationalism occurred. Fascism and Nazism began, to all appearances, as nationalistic phenomena, but fascism soon took root outside of Italy, and Nazism, contrary to the common interpretation, was from the outset an international phenomenon. (Its racially selective internationalism, appealing to the Nordic nations, was not in Pfaff's view limited to the state of Germany.) The Soviet Union under both Lenin and Stalin was internationalist in orientation, although Stalin found it expedient to evoke the spirit of Russian nationalism during the war with Germany, which he called the Great Patriotic War. Stalin attempted to make Russian domination of the Soviet Union more palatable to the other nationalities by creating a number of supposedly autonomous republics (the Baltic states were independent before Stalin annexed them in 1940). When the hardliners' *coup d'etat* failed in 1991, this fictitious nationhood suddenly became a reality, turning the Soviet Union into the short-lived Commonwealth of Independent States, which effectively no longer exists.

The most auspicious development since World War II to counteract the evils of nationalism is, in Pfaff's opinion, the creation of the European Community, which he believes is unfortunately entering a critical and dangerous period as a consequence of the emergence of new nationalistic forces in Central Europe. Although he praises the economic cooperation between France and West Germany inaugurated in practical ways by Jean Monnet and Konrad Adenauer, Pfaff fears that the addition of state after state to the (Western) European economic confederation will make political unity and a common foreign policy increasingly impossible, as demonstrated by the failure of the European Community to exercise a constructive influence on the continuing crisis in the former Yugoslavia.

Pfaff has some wise but politically incorrect ideas about the future of Africa, arguing that the African states created by the withdrawal of the colonial powers are essentially unstable and have generally created more miserable conditions for their populations than those that prevailed under the more or less enlightened rule of the colonial powers. He also predicts a very bleak future for South Africa after the abdication of the minority white government. He recommends a reintroduction of a kind of colonialism patterned on the mandates that were granted Britain and France after World War I, but holds that such mandates would need to be granted to the United Nations, rather than to individual powers, in order to make them acceptable both to the mandating powers and to the countries where the mandates are to be exercised. Finally, Pfaff considers the question of whether the United States is a nation, and, if so, how and when it became one. He appears sympathetic to the cause of the Confederacy and suggests that if the South had become independent the subsequent history of the world might have been much more peaceful.

In short, Pfaff offers a masterful analysis of a situation that he deems almost impossible to remedy, concluding with lines that seem to echo Calvin as well as Pascal: "Man as such does not grow better. He is free. He remains the beast /angel that Pascal called him, a chaos, contradiction, prodigy. He progresses only by recognizing his nature, his misery together with his sublime possibility. A politics has to be built on that."

Harold O.J. Brown is the director of The Rockford Institute Center on Religion and Society. He teaches theology and ethics at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Border Crossings

by Gregory McNamee

Cutting for Sign
by William Langewiesche
New York: Pantheon;
247 pp., $23.00

◆

It is by now a truism to say that the border between the United States and Mexico encompasses a third nation, one that shares in both societies but that forms its own culture. That may well be, but the border represents different things to different people. For some Anglos, it is a glimpse of Third World exoticism out the back door. For others, it is a safety hatch, an entrance into a land of mescal, sun, and the long goodbye. For some Mexicans, it stands as a hateful re-

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minder of lost territory. For still others, it is an obstacle to be overcome in reaching the land of milk and honey. For writer William Langewiesche, however, the border represents a great rift, a chasm separating two inimical nations that alternately despise and ignore each other: in his view, it stands as the most visible symbol of political division in the present world. "Only here," he writes, "do the first and third worlds meet face-to-face, with no second world in between."

In *Cutting for Sign*, his first book, Langewiesche recounts a composite journey along the frontier, observing and reporting what he sees along the way. That journey has been made many times before, most recently by writers Tom Miller (*On the Border*) and Alan Weisman (*La Frontera*), but Langewiesche finds new twists that keep his book from treading on theirs, particularly in his attention to political issues. He starts off literally *in medias res*, viewing the broad sweep of the border from the midway vantage point of the Big Bend. From there, he reflects on his dealings with a hard-edged Mexican ranch hand who once lived near his place outside of Marfa, Texas, a man with whom he could never quite connect. Langewiesche returns to him at several points in the book, most tellingly when describing their last encounter: "We had little to say," he remembers, "and he wanted me gone."

Cutting for Sign has its origins in a long article Langewiesche wrote two years ago at the commission of the *Atlantic*; in expanding it to book length, he has introduced much thoughtful reflection on matters he had earlier reported only briefly: immigration, cultural conflict, the economy of drug smuggling, local power struggles, clashes between Anglo- and Mexican-American interest groups, and so on. His on-the-ground reportage is solid work, and some of the best moments of the book come when he is among the people for whom the international line means life-and-death political reality. He gives us a view of the daily life of a Border Patrol agent in San Ysidro, California, where the frontier ends in ocean, a routine that involves the endless frustration of never being able to halt the tide of illegal entry from Mexico into the United States. (The agent sighs, resignedly, "We could link hands out here and still not stop them.") Langewiesche uses the occasion to embark on an intricate discussion of current immigration policy, arriving at a provocative conclusion: given our current social and economic woes, the border needs to be sealed more tightly. "Impoverished immigrants," he argues, "do not cause these problems, but they add to them." His call for greater restrictions does not keep him from appreciating the good reasons the *alambristas*, the wire-jumpers, have for moving northward. Neither does it ignore the agent's unhappy observation: "The truth is that everyone who persists eventually manages to enter the United States."

Langewiesche has a special interest in the border's economics, legal and illegal. He takes us alongside a Tohono O'odham tracking party that works the old Devils Highway, "cutting for sign"—searching for tracks—of *narcotraficantes*, smugglers who use the sparsely populated reservation as an avenue for bringing cocaine and marijuana to gringo markets. The agent in charge, like the border patrolman, recognizes that their work is largely futile, noting in disgust that advancements like barrage balloons and computers have made his work harder, not easier, by bringing a mountain of undigested information to his desk and thus keeping him from the field. When informed that he is about to be assigned a long-promised "intelligence analyst," the chief says drily, "What the hell's he gonna tell me—that marijuana's green?"

Langewiesche also leads his readers inside what appears to be a rarity: an equitably run *maquiladora*, or American-owned factory in Mexico, where labor costs are low and environmental and business regulations are looser than north of the fence. He finds little to celebrate in having dug out the rare instance of an operation whose employees receive full benefits, sick leave, and free meals during the workday. In Langewiesche's view, it will remain rare: "To the extent that Mexico ties its future to the United States," he writes, "industry will continue to concentrate on the border. The *maquilas* will shed their skins but live on in similar forms."

Neither does he foresee much hope for improved relations between the United States and Mexico. "The ideal of a shared humanity," he rightly observes, "does not withstand the mapmaker's pen." Despite the promises of the newly approved North American Free Trade Agreement, whose champions foresee a prosperous future for the continent's in-

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habitants, Langewiesche believes that the status quo will prevail. The frontier will continue to be many things to many people, but it will always be a gaping chasm between two nations. As he says, "The Rio Grande"—and by extension the rest of the border—"has become boundary first and river second. And time is on the side of the government."

Gregory McNamee is the author, most recently, of Gila: The Life and Death of an American River *(Crown).*

Brief Mentions

The Sixties: The Last Journal, 1960-1972. *By Edmund Wilson (edited by Lewis M. Dabney) New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 968 pp., $35.00*

The disappointing qualities of this final volume of Edmund Wilson's diaries, due partially to surfeit (over 2,000 pages of *The Twenties*, *The Thirties*, *The Forties*, and *The Fifties* precede these almost 1,000), have finally to do with the limitations of the modern secular intellectual mind as it wrestles with the perceived insufficiency, tawdriness, and dishonesty of the contemporary world. Viewed from this perspective, even Wilson's enormous intellectual curiosity seems less an inspiration and more a source of frustration and depression for the reader who has devotedly kept company with the critic and author from his youthful days as a New York bohemian to his finish as the fearsome Old Man of Talcottville. As a writer and as a human being, Wilson was in his own way a great man and a great American, at once an original and a type that is, alas, now nearly extinct. The scion of an established Middle Atlantic family, he inherited the positivism of the 19th-century American upper-middle class, as well as the strong-mindedness that never feared to be mistaken for simple eccentricity; the first led him into a flirtation with communism, the second rescued him from his interest in Marxist theory and practice and caused him finally to renounce the liberal bureaucratic statism that his former ideals had produced in postwar America. ("Whether I stay or leave," he wrote in the 1960's, "this is no longer the place for me.") Substantially, he devoted his life to tracking the Enemy to his lair, only to discover in old age that he had been sleeping with him for decades. By the time he made this discovery and began—characteristically—to talk and write about it, he was too much the Grand Old Man to be punished or criticized for his heresies; instead, as Bill Kauffman observed recently in these pages, he was merely tolerated. All his life he persisted in cultivating too many interests and toying with too many intellectual baubles; he was a man who essentially could not see the woods for the trees and who was egregiously wrong on too many subjects. His intellect, though always in play, was largely undiscriminating. "Do you believe in God?" he asked a friend in his last years. "I don't." He didn't need God; he had puppetry instead. He died in 1972 at the age of 77, still a morally strong man of learning without real wisdom, but finally clear-sighted about the aggressive monster his country had become.

—Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Never Stop Running: Allard Lowenstein and the Struggle to Save American Liberalism. *By William Chafe New York: Basic Books; 592 pp., $28.00*

"What is one to make of such a life?" asks William Chafe near the end of his intimate investigation into the peripatetic life of Allard Lowenstein. Chafe's Lowenstein was a man in perpetual anguish. From his days as a student leader through his single term in Congress in the late 1960's to his assassination in 1980 by a drug-crazed former *protégé*, Al Lowenstein was a man tormented by his father (who demanded perfection), by his Jewishness, by his failures to be returned to Congress, and by his increasing sexual confusion: Chafe's contention is that Al Lowenstein, the complete political animal, was really Al Lowenstein, the incomplete sexual being. Ultimately a loner, the private Lowenstein spent his life avoiding commitments, despite eventually acquiring a wife and children. His was a life of few friends and many followers (most of whom just happened to be young, male, handsome, impressionable, insecure, and WASPish). As his life neared its tragic end, Al Lowenstein, now divorced from his wife and repudiated by his constituents, seems to have been coming to terms with the individual who William Chafe has decided that he was all along: the second phase of his sexually liberated life was about to begin when he was gunned down in Manhattan as he worked to destroy another Democratic President (Jimmy Carter) and elevate another Kennedy (Senator Ted). Was Lowenstein unlucky enough to be murdered just when he had finally transcended his past? Perhaps. Yet while a no-longer-young student leader, circa 1968, might still move a crowd, an aging ex-student leader in the era of Reagan could only have been an embarrassment.

—John C. Chalberg

LIBERAL ARTS

INVOLUNTARY TREE SLAUGHTER

The New York City Parks Department spent $1,000 on a funeral for a tree, reported *Newsday* last March. Complete with a five-foot high memorial stone, printed programs, and black armbands for the mourners, the funeral service was attended by about 100 people, 60 of whom were parks workers on the clock.

The tree, a 63-year-old blue atlas cedar, died when its roots exploded as contractors were trying to move it to another location to make way for the expansion of the National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. During the funeral service, taps was played, "Amazing Grace" was sung, and a eulogy was given by Parks Commissioner Henry Stern. The park's flags were lowered to half-staff.

But the cedar's case is not yet closed. Stern promised that "an inquest will be held to determine the precise circumstances. The matter could be called an accident, a case of negligence, or involuntary tree slaughter."

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Letter From Australia

by R. J. Stove

Australians All, Let Ostriches

◆

"Australians all, let ostriches, / For we are young and free"—the attempt by an expensively educated Australian schoolchild to notate the first two lines of Australia's national anthem (the first line of which is "Australians all, let us rejoice").

Bill and Hillary not surrealistic enough for your jaded tastes? Alarmed by passing signs of incipient realism in the Republican camp? Then come to sunny Australia, which now requires only the late Hervé Villechaize frenziedly squawking "The plane! The plane!" before its resemblance to the more deranged outpost of Fantasy Island is complete.

Having presided over a few trifles like 12 percent unemployment (this on the most cautious estimates) and a foreign debt of $170 billion, the incumbent Labor government—led, if that is the word, since December 1991 by Prime Minister Paul Keating—romped home in last year's federal election. Like John Major's narrow margin of victory in 1992, the Keating triumph defied the expectations of almost all pollsters and op-ed "experts"—even the more timid of whom had predicted success for the opposition Liberal-National alliance by a margin of at least two percent. Had such panjandrums taken due heed of maverick Labor Senator Peter Walsh (effectively marginalized by his own party for his repeated censure of its incumbent tree-huggers and mass-immigration apologists), they might have saved themselves the omelette-like quantities of egg that covered their faces as soon as the results began coming in on election night. Well before the average pundit had acquired the smallest consciousness of how deep popular hatred toward Liberal-National free-market ideology had always run, Senator Walsh—amazed despite himself by the anti-Labor parties' defeat during four consecutive federal elections—remarked in his habitual, euphuistic manner: "Those dopey bastards are gunna lose another one." And, with a perfection so complete as to border on actual beauty, they did, having lumbered themselves with a vow to introduce a 15 percent consumption tax if they won office. It should go almost without saying that the leader of the anti-Labor parties, Dr. John Hewson, was by profession an economist—burdened, to add to his woes, with a merchant-banker wife who publicly lauded Hillary as a role model.

The 1993 result's ultimate touch of grotesquerie, however, did not occur until a month after Labor's victory. When opposition leader Andrew Peacock lost the 1990 election, he had the decency to resign within days. Dr. Hewson, by contrast, had no sooner snatched defeat from the jaws of victory than he announced that he would stay on as leader. Sure enough, the party that he had enabled to lose the unlosable election voted to keep him in his job for another three years: the better to confirm its total divorce from anything that could be construed as political sanity.

At this point, the non-Australian reader might have grown sufficiently restive to echo P. J. O'Rourke's expostulation: "Damn it, we can't be expected to stay up to speed on every one of these Third World pissing contests." What larger significance could elective dictatorship with Mr. Keating at its head contain now that History, as we all know, has ended?

One can best answer this question by stressing the completeness with which Australian conservatism now reflects the fissure between libertarians and traditionalists. On the other hand, Labor need fear no fissure at all, because since winning government in 1983 it has adopted Disraeli's tactic of "catching the Liberals bathing and running away with their clothes"—and adopted it with a thoroughness that would have left Dizzy himself dumbstruck with admiration. There is no strategy, however incompatible with historic Labor traditions, that Labor since 1983 has not employed. Consider: Since 1983 the party that once swore never to permit uranium mining now permits three uranium mines in South Australia. The party that until the mid-1960's opposed colored immigration in the most vehement white-supremacist terms (one recollects erstwhile Labor Cabinet Minister Arthur Calwell's jibe at Chinese refugees: "Two Wongs don't make a white") now straight-facedly insists that it and it alone scrapped the White Australia Policy. The party whose more hebetudinous spokesmen long regarded even Queen Victoria as a stooge of Semitic bankers (and in 1897 sneered at what they called her Diamond "Jew-bilee") now not only adores Big Business but is as assured of the Jewish vote as American Democrats are of the black vote. The party that applauded even the most cowardly protests against America's role in the Vietnam War now enthusiastically defends America's role in the Gulf War. The party that fortified Australia with one of the Western world's most impassable tariff barriers now greets any favorable mention of tariffs with demands that the speaker wash his mouth out with soap and water. Even the sartorial difference between Old Labor and New Labor is instructive. Mr. Keating prides himself not only on his collection of Second Empire clocks but on his chic Italian tailoring. H. V. Evatt, Labor Foreign Minister in the 1940's, dressed in so uncouth a style that at U.N. headquarters he was sometimes mistaken for one of the more slatternly menials.

Contrast this eclecticism with the attitude that has prevailed in Liberal, and lately even in National, ranks since Malcolm Fraser lost office in 1983. Between 1981 and mid-1991, the Liberals lost 17 out of 18 mainland elections, state and federal. (The exception was the New South Wales election of 1988.) In 1983 Queensland's Liberals, who had helped keep the National Party in control of that state for the previous 26 years, broke with their allies and have been a national joke ever since for their ineffectiveness. Queensland's Nationals—in particular Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, Queensland's premier for 19 years—typified everything that the Liberals detested and still detest: low-church, sometimes fundamentalist, Protestantism; total opposition to hard drugs and to sexual permissiveness; impatience with intellectuals; a school system that dared to penalize laziness; a criminal justice system concerned with other things than the sybaritic comfort of homicidal prisoners; genuine, rather than merely rhetori-

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cal, hatred of the effete and treasonous mandarins running Canberra; skepticism about an unfettered market—in short, Australia's nearest equivalent to George Wallace's platform in 1968.

It is impossible to envisage an anti-Labor coalition ever again winning at the federal level unless it courts Australia's counterpart to the Wallace vote. This it dares not do in the open, since Dr. Hewson's deputy (Tim Fischer, the Nationals' federal leader) has staked his whole career on making the Nationals as indistinguishable from the Liberals—and therefore as eager as any Liberal to pursue neoconservative chimeras—as possible. But recently certain Nationals, some of whom opposed Sir Joh's third-party drive seven years back, gave unmistakable notice to where Dr. Hewson and Mr. Fischer can stick their current zeal to abolish all tariffs before the year 2000. These Nationals, nearly all representing Australia's sugar-cane belt, markedly increased their share of the vote in 1993, having condemned the damage that Hewson/Fischer dogma would cause Australia's sugar production. Such increases occurred despite what elsewhere was an embarrassingly weak National performance this time around. Indeed, the fortunes of the "official" (i.e., non-Sir Joh) National Party, since it changed its name from the Country Party in 1982, have plunged. The party forsook its old title in the vain hope that it could improve its image with city-dwelling electorates while keeping its agrarian support. Nowadays the Nationals can rely on only seven percent of the Australia-wide vote, which nearly puts them in the Kim Campbell league of political disaster; they count it as an excuse for self-congratulation when their federal leader simply manages to retain his seat. Their federal leader in 1990, Charles Blunt, ignominiously lost: thanks to veteran antinuclear activist Helen Caldicott, whose campaign was not strong enough to put her in the House of Representatives, yet was quite strong enough to kick Mr. Blunt out.

But does all the foregoing mean that Australia's groans and travails matter? In themselves, perhaps, no; alongside Mr. Keating's latest and most shameless attempts to rewrite Australian history, yes. For most of the years since 1901, when Australia achieved federation, demands that we overthrow our constitutional monarchy and establish a republic in its stead were restricted to the politically impotent. In 1954, when Elizabeth II first visited Australia (having been legally confirmed as "Queen of Australia" the previous year), Sir Robert Menzies' expressions of royalist fidelity were matched compliment for compliment by each Labor leader, including Dr. Evatt, then ostensibly in charge of the federal opposition, and New South Wales Labor Premier Joe Cahill.

Intermittent childish gestures of Labor malice toward the Royal Family or its representatives did occur. In 1972 Bill Hayden—now governor-general, but then a rookie cabinet minister and self-confessed republican—refused to have a drink with Sir Paul Hasluck because he deprecated the vice-regal office. Nine years later the Labor Party wrote into its manifesto a call urging Australia to become a republic. But the dominant attitude among practicing politicians, however left-wing, was that Australia had no more urgent need of republicanism than Saint Augustine had of chastity.

The Australian Republican Movement embraced Mr. Keating, its two most prominent office-holders being Malcolm Turnbull and Thomas Keneally. Mr. Turnbull is an Anglophobic barrister ("the Ayatollah," friends unabashedly call him), most famous for turning the 1986 court case over *Spycatcher*'s publication into a wild attack on what he supposed to be the British ruling caste. Mr. Keneally, who once boasted a reputation as a solemn if not serious novelist, is today best-known among historians of AustLit as a snapper-up of what *he* supposed to be an unconsidered fictional trifle. The trifle's original author was, alas, disobliging enough to sue Mr. Keneally for plagiarism, and since the expensive out-of-court settlement that his trial's outcome obliged him to make, Mr. Keneally has mostly confined himself to exuding incoherent pulp-fiction and ungrammatical *causeries*. His latest attempt at a manifesto, *Our Republic*, was so illiterate that it disgusted even various professed republicans. No one familiar with AustLit *moeurs* will be astonished to learn that Susan Hines, the "editor" responsible for publishing Mr. Keneally's effort, has been awarded a fellowship for study in New York, the most honored prize that her profession's Australian branch can bestow. We may discern a fearful symmetry in the fact that the publisher of Australia's most notorious literary kleptomaniac can now live in Martin Luther King's homeland.

Such shenanigans might bespeak clownishness more than malice; yet, as the Good Soldier Svejk never tired of showing us, it is an all too frequent conservative vice to underestimate clowns, especially when they enjoy what Svejk never had—a cornucopia's worth of taxpayers' money, to be hurled down every last politically correct rat-hole whenever Mr. Keating nods (or screams) his assent: a half-million dollars for Mr. Turnbull's Republic Advisory Committee; 500 million dollars annually for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's republican diatribes; republican "schooling" programs, aimed at the several million adolescents who (in the caustic words of Canberra reporter Paul Lyneham) probably suppose that the "constitution" is the name of a rock band; Mr. Keating's endless lies—or delusions (after a while one stops caring which)—maintaining that Singapore's capture in 1942 was a dastardly British plot against Australian troops; his subsidized contests to dream up a new flag, presumably in order that Australia may partake of the boundless multicultural joys that Canada reaped by expunging the Union Jack from *its* flag; his confrontation with a veterans association's former leader, who when seen holding the present Australian flag was ordered by Mr. Keating to "give it to your Pommy [British] mates"; the new citizenship oath that omits all references to the monarchy; the surreptitious removal, with truly Orwellian lese majesty, of the Sydney plaque that commemorates Elizabeth II's first footsteps on Australia's shores . . . ain't we got fun.

The rationale offered for such social engineering is always the same. A republic, Mr. Keating assures us, will make Australia "independent" (we're $170 billion in debt, our armed forces can't even fight off domestic feminists, and he still imagines we can be independent). Above all, we must become a republic because "Australia is a part of Asia" (a neat circumlocution for "Our immigration policy for the last decade has advocated flooding Australia with the unassimilable, the unemployable, and the unintelligible, while simultaneously denouncing all critics of this procedure as 'racists'"). What appeal Mr. Keating believes that antimonarchist spite possesses for Japan, our biggest trading partner, remains unclear. It took New South Wales parliamentarian Helen Sham-Ho, the first Chinese member of any Aus-

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tralian legislature, to point out that our insistence on having the world's highest *per capita* immigration intake is already creating quite enough community bitterness. Aggravating this bitterness—by appealing to childish Anglophobic rancor in the quest for a republic—is something that, as Max Shulman nearly said, we need the way we need extra nostrils.

But one would never gather as much from the Labor Party's academic and journalistic entourage, several members of which openly crave bloodshed in a manner that even on *Soldier of Fortune* readers' lips would seem excessive. This crowd's guru was, and is, Manning Clark (1915-91), author of the Walter Duranty-like *Meeting Soviet Man* and of a six-volume infringement of the Trade Descriptions Act entitled A *History of Australia*. Last September, Peter Ryan, the publisher responsible for seeing this behemoth through the presses, suffered an eloquent though belated attack of guilty conscience: he admitted that Manning Clark was a totalitarian fraud, that Clark's alleged historiographical masterpiece blended fustian with fiction, and that "of the many things in my life upon which I must look back with shame, the chiefest is that of having been the publisher of Manning Clark's A *History of Australia*." For proclaiming these conclusions, Mr. Ryan was traduced by Clark's camp-followers, on nationwide TV and in the daily broadsheets, with a rage that evoked the treatment of Clarence Thomas. That Mr. Ryan would incur the standard leftist accusations of fascism, racism, militarism, and dementia—combined by some assailants, such as *Time*'s Robert Hughes, with endearing admissions of not actually having read Mr. Ryan's mea culpa—was easy to predict.

Other accusations were more memorable. Don Watson, Mr. Keating's speechwriter and a self-styled advocate of something called "a postmodern republic," applied to Mr. Ryan the term "cannibal": an epithet last publicly employed, to my knowledge, when Stalin was still in his Kremlin and all was right (i.e., left) with Mr. Watson's world. Geoffrey Blainey, hounded out of his Melbourne University job because of his allegedly "Eurocentric" utterances, had gently but firmly condemned Clark's anti-British ravings as "the Black Armband view" of history. (Upholders of the Black Armband view aver that white male Australians should spend their whole lives in orgies of breast-beating because of what they or their ancestors did to Aborigines, Kanakas, women, homosexuals, ecosystems, and so forth. Sound familiar?) Professor Blainey's sentiments provoked one Henry Reynolds into announcing that "you [Blainey] are going to get shot at . . . you have to expect to be clobbered and people will jump on you." Since then Professor Reynolds has predicted, with chop-smacking relish, "violence and direct action" by Aborigines against their white "oppressors": oppressors who happen to spend a mere $1.5 billion per annum on social welfare for those whom they purportedly oppress.

Thanks to the Australian High Court's present craze for judicial activism, Professor Reynolds' calls for mass murder can no longer be laughed away. In the 1992 *Mabo* v. *Queensland* case, a majority of High Court judges ruled that the concept of *terra nullius*—which had underpinned European settlement in Australia from 1788 onwards—was invalid. (Had the judges been half as interested in history as in appeasing Aboriginal extremists, they would have emphasized that *terra nullius* meant not "unpopulated land" but "*unowned land*." Since the Aboriginal tribes were nomadic—this trait itself explaining much of their Rousseauist appeal to urban white degenerates—it is hard to see how they could ever have harbored Western ideas of land ownership.) Disregard the pettifogging jargon in which the *Mabo* ruling is predictably couched, and the message—as several High Court judges have admitted—becomes clear. Inalienable native title, on the lines of (dare one say it) Verwoerd's "tribal homelands," is what the High Court wants Australia to have. The mere fact that Aborigines already and exclusively control almost half the Northern Territory and substantial areas of the states—around 14 percent of Australia's total area—is apparently irrelevant. We must hand over all Australia, if need be, to Aboriginal rule. Hence the widespread cruel joke, "What does *Mabo* stand for? Making Aborigines Billionaires Overnight."

So what if mining, which now generates over 40 percent of Australia's export income, is the one industry that even now might yet save us from sempiternal Third World status? So what if various Aboriginal groups, fearful of the dole-queue, *want* mining to go ahead in their locality? So what if a concerted federal policy to stop Aborigines from drinking themselves to death would be (as the Northern Territory's government has been saying for years) a better service

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to Aboriginal Australia than any liberal cant? To these inquiries the answer of the High Court—not to mention Mr. Keating, the Labor Party, the churches, the universities, the teacher unions, and the press gallery—is changeless: you are living on borrowed time and stolen property; the latter is *de facto*, and might well soon be *de jure*, up for grabs; whenever you aim to offer us any effective resistance, we shall simply invoke international law against you; and if the resultant despoliation of what was once among the West's most peaceful societies makes you want to shut your eyes and think of Somalia, that just demonstrates what a loathsome fascist *you* are.

Never mind. To distract us from these and other disagreeable musings, we at least can now claim our indigenous variety of bread and circuses. Why not attend the Sydney 2000 Olympics, where the circuses will be inescapable, and where most of the bread will go toward making Australia's largest metropolis the best thing to happen to druggies since Woodstock? Honestly, with all those degenerates chasing one another, you'll feel right at home.

R.J. Stove writes from Sydney.

Letter From the Marine Corps

by Christopher Check

Personal Moral Values

◆

Marines are a direct lot, not much given to subtlety. Their simple nature enables them to spot a ruse from the 500-meter line, and, on the issue of sodomites, they have quickly identified as nonsense Mr. Clinton's doublespeak about "status" and "conduct." Marines, well known for advertising their "status" by their "conduct," know that the two are by no means separable. Still, it is not Mr. Clinton's equivocation that upsets them. They expect as much from a man many view as a liar, a dope-smoker, and a draft-dodger. What disappoints the men of the Corps is their betrayal by the senior officers of the Armed Forces who are attempting to pacify the legions while satisfying their Commander-in-Chief.

Knowing in their hearts that ultimately they cannot do both, the ranking officers in Washington have made it clear that they have chosen the path of political expedience. A "Message for All Marines" from the Commandant, packed with such phrases as "diverse walks of life," "privately held preferences," and "respect for human dignity," can only be interpreted as an effort, thin as it is, to pave the way for the inevitable. A Christmas card from a colonel at the Pentagon suggested that the moment Clinton was elected, the staff there began planning how best to lift the ban on homosexuals. Advancing the inherently dishonest "don't ask, don't tell" scheme to permit homosexuals to serve openly in the Armed Forces will be easy. The courts are aptly doing so today. But selling the President's policy to the men in the trenches will be impossible.

Sadly, many officers will try, and in so doing will fail, to exhibit moral courage and will sacrifice their credibility as they attempt to conceal their spinelessness with talk of "status versus conduct," "loyalty to one's commander," "soldierly obedience," "diversity," and "preference." Talk of this kind reveals the worst form of coward. It not only shows an unwillingness to stand up for what is right; it also exposes a hollow effort to justify inaction by appealing to inferior or irrelevant "virtues." Some Marines will be fooled, most will not be, and another strand of the fraternal rope that binds all Marines will be broken.

Marines are the last group to whom one should suggest that "status" and "conduct" are separable. To Marines they are identical. Marines are fighters, drinkers, and fornicators, behaviors for which they not only make no excuses but which they wear on their sleeves. How do you convince a man who bases his reputation on last night's exploits that a homosexual is not going to pursue his inclinations with equivalent vigor? Good luck.

Although appeals to loyalty will be more successful than the "status versus conduct" mumbo-jumbo, they also will fail because loyalty runs both ways. Officers must constantly guard against viewing loyalty only as something due them. The loyalty of their Marines is something for which they must work daily, yet the greater loyalty, and the one less spoken of, is that which proceeds downwards, from officers to men. A self-absorbed politician may not understand this simple precept of leadership, but could it be that the Commandant of the Marine Corps, once an enlisted man himself, has forgotten so critical a principle? Marines will be enjoined to be loyal to their Commander-in-Chief. In fact, they must be loyal to the office but not to the destructive silliness of the occupant. Loyalty to their Republic requires them to make the distinction.

Where loyalty treads so does obedience, but like loyalty, obedience must be merited even as it is expected. The claim that the ultimate course of a good warrior is to accept orders, salute smartly, and continue to march assumes that the orders merit such obedience. Marines love obedience. They learn to love it at boot camp, and if they are well led they grow in their appreciation for it. However, if their obedience is abused by foolish orders, they soon grow resentful and skeptical. A good officer quickly learns that if his orders are wise and just, he will earn the trust of his Marines, so that when the shrapnel flies, they will not doubt but obey. An officer with a reputation for unreasonable or unjust orders might be tolerated in garrison but will be ignored under fire. In his heart, the Commandant must know these things. Has his head been so filled with the inverse truths of politics that he not only accepts them, but also believes that he can persuade his Marines to accept them, too?

His method suggests that he does. He employs the already tired rhetoric that has replaced the precise language of natural law. Where once we read "deviance" we now read "diversity." "Preference" has replaced "profligacy." Marines, however, have a strong sense of natural law. They know that sodomy is wrong and see right through the Commandant's transparent words. The responses from Marines range from a lance corporal's "I'm unhappy with the Commandant's stance on homosexuals. . . . He seems to have backed off from his original position. . . . I hope Congress will be stronger" to a sergeant's "Sir, this is bull---t!"

Politics should not be the business of any Marine. Some of the greatest heroes of our Corps are well known for the contempt they harbored for politicians. Does the Commandant think Chesty Puller would have penned a message like his? Who can imagine Dan Daly ago-

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nizing over how best to integrate sodomites into the Corps? These men thought about war and how to win it.

The most tragic casualty of a peacetime military is the abandonment of moral courage. It is in peace that we need courage most, for it is the virtue that prevents the political culture from intruding too deeply into the military culture. Because the military is the violent arm of the Republic, it must never become corrupted by politics. The military, more than any other organization, must resist change until the case is compellingly made that the change is good. Once progressive sociology invades the military sphere, an institution where tradition has practical value, it renders the military no longer warlike but confused and weak. The conspicuous absence of moral courage today has landed the Corps behind the soup line in Somalia and has cost the lives of 240 Marines in Beirut.

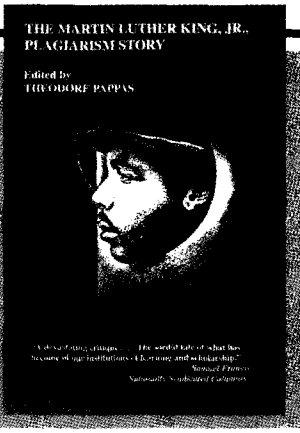
The Commandant writes, "The greatest contribution our Corps has made to this Nation, or will ever make, is not that we win wars, but that we make Marines." A cleverly veiled lie. That the Marine Corps produces disciplined patriots well equipped to shoulder leadership in American society is to its eternal credit. Marines don't get to "guard the streets of heaven" simply because they are vigilant warriors. They earn that right because they are good men. Nevertheless, once the Corps is no longer recognized principally for its unequaled ability to vanquish our enemies on the battlefield, but is instead praised as a factory for producing good citizens, the sociologists have taken over.

Does the Commandant imply that he can take a queer and make him a Marine? Should the Corps turn in its cannons and open a charm school? Perhaps such a plan is one of the alternate uses of the Armed Forces that the administration is considering. I, for one, refuse to support any such agenda. I did not accept a commission from the Marine Corps, nor did those officers with whom I served, to advance the agenda of homosexuals, anymore than we did to rebuild homes in Dade County or to subordinate the pursuit of success under fire to the career aspirations of feminists.

But mine is a small voice. Surely, there must be one man among the senior officers of the Corps who will muster the courage to say, "I will not count myself among those who allowed sodomites to wear the Eagle Globe and Anchor and will do all in my power to resist so wretched an indignity." Though he may lose his career and his pension, he will preserve his credibility and self-respect. Do not hope for such a man, however. After all, only one English bishop stood up to Henry VIII, well aware he had more at stake than his pension.

The Commandant concludes his message with this plea: "It is not characteristic of Marines to quit their posts, either under fire or when things are not to their liking. Those of you whose pride in the Corps, sense of duty, honor, and personal moral values run so deep, are exactly the ones needed to remain on watch to provide a steady hand." Understanding quite clearly what the Corps' position on the issue of sodomites is to be, I wonder which of my "personal moral values" still interest the Commandant.

Christopher Check resigned his commission as a captain in the Marine Corps. He joined The Rockford Institute last December as associate director of The Center on the Family in America.



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POLITICS

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The Divine Left vs. the New Right

by Tomislav Sunic

This time around, the divine left is definitely short of ideological change. Once upon a recent time it went to sleep with uncle Stalin; much later, it began to yawn with the revisionist Trotsky, Mao, and Tito; today, it is noisily waking up to the tune of politically correct liberalism. Even a layman must raise a simple question: If the divine left did not have the guts to state publicly that it once was deadly wrong, how can one be sure that it is right today? Of course, its belated ideological menopause requires updated political romanticism, stretching today from the lacrimal advocacy of human rights to the fervent campaigns for the rights of pets, penguins, and pedophiles. Short of its hard right-wing nemesis, which is, alas, nowhere in sight, the divine left must resort to labels of demonization, dubbing every opponent a proverbial fascist pig.

The unstoppable corrosion of the liberal experiment in the East is causing nightmares for the divine left and its socialist-liberal offshoots in the West. The recent nationalist-communist temptation in Poland, Russia, and Lithuania is casting a long shadow of uncertainty on the liberal legacy. The facts, after all, speak for themselves; the free market experiment in Eastern Europe has resulted in a poverty that even bygone communist horror had managed to avoid. First decapitated by communist pathology, only to be recently inundated by growing market uncertainty, who can the disenfranchised masses in Eastern Europe turn to and which new angels can they now follow? Might it be that the bad guys from the bin of recent history were partially right? Could it be that some national-communist hybrid may offer the best political alternative for the New World Order facing old disasters? Right-wing populism, coupled with a growing appetite for a command economy, is meticulously paving its way through the mind-set of Europe.

Recently, the European New Right and its youngish French theoretical leader, Alain de Benoist, came again under the liberal-socialist limelights, presumably because of their never-ending search for the Third Way. Benoist, who has been preaching the exit from left- and right-wing dualism for over 25 years, was again called to account. His prestigious quarterly *Krisis*, in which both left-leaning and right-leaning scholars and erudites have found a platform for political and philosophical debate, has triggered a witch-hunt from all corners of the French intelligentsia. The first to hit him with charges of fascist and communist sympathies were some French *Le Monde* journalists, who were quickly mimicked by other defamers throughout Europe. As one could expect, instead of trying to refute the New Right's scholarly endeavors and Benoist's ideas, French and Belgian journalists, together with other politically correct writers, called for censorship—in the name of human rights and tolerance. The divine left and its liberal fellow-travelers seem to be indefatigable in defending all types of multicultural pluralisms, but they adamantly refuse the pluralism of new ideas. They deplore multiethnic purges in the Balkans but employ sophisticated purges against their erudite enemies. The modern hit-scribes attempt to relegate Alain de Benoist and other independent thinkers to the dustbin of history, although this time history has returned.

Benoist has long declared that, in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the cleavage "left vs. right" means absolutely nothing. The discourse of the Versailles-Potsdam architects is no longer valid in the face of new geopolitical tremors, which are causing new intellectual rifts and surprising alliances throughout Europe and the world. What do the words fascism or communism really mean after the collapse of their respective systems? When Stalin went after the communist Trotsky, he called him a "fascist traitor"; when American campus students protested against the conservative Richard Nixon, they dubbed him a "fascist pig"; when a feminist gets tired of her awkward male, she calls him a "fascist jerk." As the words "commie" and "fascist" become political footballs, so do their respective historical incarnations become trivialized and forgotten.

Could one not, after the brutal collapse of both communist and fascist systems, partially adhere to the conservative legacy, insofar as this legacy incorporates tradition and historical memory? And could one not concomitantly and partially tinker with the socialist credo or planned economy in a country shaken by barbaric upsurge in the *only me* generation? Unquestionably, even the modern standard-bearers of progress can no longer deny that the liberal illusion of permanent economic growth is slowly coming to a close. Today, even the French left is badly split. Some prominent left-leaning heavyweights, some of whom have collaborated with Benoist's *Krisis*, have come to his defense and vocally denounced the new intellectual inquisition. Prominent left-leaning journalists, like Jean-François Kahn or Jacques Julliard from *Le Nouvel Observateur*, have distanced themselves from the modern watchdogs of political correctness. Even the former Bolivian *guerillero*, the famed philosopher Régis Debray, as well as the known sociologist of postmodern surreality, Jean Baudrillard, have scorned the modern liberal-socialist scribes in search of sensation. Many intellectuals in Europe know very well that different times are

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coming. Few independent thinkers can shrug off the fact that the Western European multicultural experiment with 16 million non-Europeans may be setting the fuse for a titanic Balkan powder keg. The wisdom of aged politically incorrect conservatives, such as Browning, Burke, and Benoist, seems to be unexpectedly gaining ground over inveterate historical optimism and its premature apostles of the end of history. Hard times are returning, as Aleksander Solzhenitsyn has warned, and, very likely, Europe and America must expect nothing from nobody: neither from their own atomized peoples nor from their distant, departed gods.

At issue in the new New Right controversy is the future of Europe after the breakdown of communism, on the one hand, and the persistent cracks in the liberal idea of progress, on the other. The European New Right, with many other European thinkers from both ends of the political spectrum, claims that the post-Cold War world can no longer be gauged by means of old ideological clichés. The rise of the Zhirinovsky syndrome in Russia, the neocommunist temptation in traditionally anticommunist Poland and Lithuania, the appeal of historicism among growing numbers of German scholars, require a different approach to political reality—an approach that goes beyond traditional left- and right-wing Manichaeism. Accordingly, political and ideological affinities have been realigned. Scores of former East European communist apparatchiks seem to have found a decent abode in a new brand of petty nationalism. Many have also converted to politically correct liberalism, grotesquely trying to prove that they are more American than the American political class. As far as French intellectuals are concerned, they have decided, some time ago, to quit the Mao pass and slide straight into the Rotary Club. Everybody, all over the Western hemisphere, is looking for new value systems in an old and disenchanted world of new unpredictability. The recent vogue in geopolitics at many European universities is confirming time and again that theologies and ideologies come and go, but rude geographic reality always remains a nation's destiny. Europe is again in the foreplay phase of a new global crisis, and current disputes among European intellectuals are like minor political necking before inevitable hardcore action.

Beyond the issue of fascism, which is falsely tied to the European New Right, there is a matter of principle that the politically correct European scribes cannot swallow. They cannot tolerate the European New Right's refusal of any sort of intellectual prostitution, in which the divine left has for decades avidly excelled. Suffice it to cast a furtive glance on the pedigree of Benoist's detractors. Most of them began their careers in the 1950's as avid brown-nosers of the commissar Zhdanov—only to become today the vocal disciples of the fun-man Joe McCarthy. The French divine left is using the generic term "fascism" to discredit its real and surreal enemies, despite the fact that it itself contributed to the rise of fascism in World War II France. Its political gadgetry had to be replaced, and consequently the old leftist emperor had to switch to new politically correct clothes. From jeans and joints he switched to Cartier and Coke; he abruptly exchanged rusted Kalashnikovs for more digestible caviar; he has traded in the muscled ideology of the gulag for the soft ideology of multiculturalism.

Indeed, a strange paradox now exists; the American traditional right, as well as its more dynamic counterpart the European New Right, appears to be more on the left today than those who claimed until yesterday the monopoly of the left. The so-called American paleoconservatives as well as the so-called European rightists are on the left insofar as they represent the new force fighting for substantive intellectual change and the radical exit from politically correct self-censorship. By contrast, the divine left, which once flirted with Marx, is hopelessly grounded as a reactionary sediment of past illusions. It pompously claims that multicultural happiness lies around the corner, although titanic ethnic cracks are surfacing everywhere. It nebulously aspires to the end of history, although history has already taken its revenge, notably in Eastern Europe. It dreams about the convivial get-together of patchwork guys from Borneo, the Bronx, and the Balkans in a promiscuous merry-go-round of global democracy. It screams for respect of human rights, while disrespecting ethnic rights. Moreover, the divine left has replaced its intellectual Mecca. It once pilgrimaged to Moscow and Havana; today it travels to its new global Damascus, called New York and Paris.

Charges of communist and fascist sympathies leveled by the divine left against the European New Right fly in the face of truth. In many of his theoretical treatises, Benoist has demonstrated that fascist racism is the offshoot of modern egalitarian schizophrenia. According to Benoist, modern anti-Semitism is a typical egalitarian pathology, which refuses Jews their Otherness by attempting to level them to the egalitarian Same. By the same egalitarian token, global democrats aspire to suppress the Other by advocating "global markets" and by turning every distant people into a hybrid Americanized shopping-mall species. The divine left and its socialist-liberal clerks operate like a reactionary fall-out, endlessly using and abusing abstract notions of democracy and human rights without ever situating them in a specific ethnic and historical context.

Some have also catalogued Benoist and the New Right as anti-American writers. Benoist, just as many other past and present European cultural conservatives, is anti-American insofar as he scorns the leveling American consumerism, the obsessive desire for global messianism, and the retreat from the tragic. They all bitterly regret the passing of true American federalism and the vanishing days of the last American hero, who once displayed the unsurpassable Jack Londonian will to self-surpassment. In a modern world of yuppie speculation, coupled with the dictatorship of well-being, there is no more rugged Shumpetarian individualism and the true *ante bellum* community. Modern American individualism has given birth to the self-centered hoarding of a happy few, who engage in vicarious pity for the distant poor of faraway antipodes. The American divine left and its liberal acolytes love to talk about the rights of blacks and Hispanics, as long as the latter do not knock on their brass gate or come close to their swimming pool. Modern European conservatives are critical of the mindless hedonism of the yuppie political class, which either benevolently or malevolently has turned the erstwhile American dream into a demonstrable nightmare.

Tomislav Sunic is a former professor of political science at Juniata College in Pennsylvania. He currently works for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Croatia.

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Park Ranger Columbo

by E. Christian Kopff

The Vince Foster Affair

A scene from an unpublished teledrama: *The Oval Office of the White House. Behind the desk, the President of the United States. He speaks into an intercom.*

Bill Clinton: Are there any more appointments today?

Voice from the intercom: There is just one more. The park ranger in charge of the investigation into poor Vince Foster's suicide would like to make his report to you.

BC, *grimaces, but responds politely*: Send him right in, please. *From a door, stage right, emerges a middle-aged man with slumping shoulders, wearing the uniform of a U.S. Park Ranger and a worn raincoat. He looks confused as he enters, then sees the President and brightens up.*

Park Ranger: Oh, Mr. President, there you are. So good of you to meet with me, Sir.

BC: Not at all, Park Ranger. I'm happy to see you.

PR, *shaking hands*: This is a real pleasure, Sir.

BC, *looking at his watch*: This will only take a few minutes, won't it, Park Ranger?

PR: Oh, yes. I think so, Sir.

BC, *beckoning to a chair in front of his desk*: Please make yourself comfortable.

PR, *sitting down*: Thank you, Mr. President. It's quite an honor to meet you, Sir. I am afraid I am very nervous, Sir. Could I ask you a favor? Would you mind if I smoked a cigar while we talked, Sir? It would help me concentrate.

BC: Well, technically the Oval Office is a "smoke-free zone," but I guess what the First Lady doesn't know won't hurt me. Will it, Park Ranger? *As they both laugh, the ranger takes out a cheap cigar and lights it.*

PR: No, Sir. I don't suppose it will. Although, to speak frankly, smoking lost me my last job. I used to work for the Los Angeles Police Department, for 20 years, Sir, but I was let go for violating the "smoke-free zones" too many times. So I am rather sensitive on the point. And you mentioned your wife, Sir. Before we begin, I want to say one thing. My wife thinks your wife is sensational. The First Lady can do no wrong in her eyes. She is going to be tickled pink that I got to meet you. *Suddenly looks embarrassed.* And you are no small potatoes yourself, Sir, if I may say so.

BC, *smiling benevolently*: Thank you, Ranger. Very kind of you. Eh, could we get down to business?

PR: Why, of course, Sir, I don't mean to take up much of your time. *Takes out a pocket notebook and stares at it, then looks up nervously.*

BC: Are there any problems, Ranger?

PR: Oh no, Sir. Nothing serious, that is. It's just that I have a mind that is bothered by little details, and I write them down in my notebook. If I could just go over a few of them with you, Sir?

BC: Certainly, Ranger.

PR: For instance, Mr. President, there is the matter of the fingerprints on the suicide note, the one Mr. Foster ripped up and threw away, Sir.

BC: What fingerprints?

PR: Exactly the point, Sir. I have tried again and again to rip up a piece of paper and leave no fingerprints on the pieces, but I just can't do it. Mr. Foster ripped up his suicide note into more than 20 pieces, and the FBI found no fingerprints on it. I just can't figure it out, Sir.

BC, *smiling*: I believe I can help you there, Park Ranger. I remember that back in Arkansas Vince often helped dry the dishes after he had finished working on the finances with the First Lady. My theory is that he had just finished drying the dishes when those awful *Wall Street Journal* editorials finally got to him and he wrote down his intentions and then ripped up the note, still wearing the rubber gloves he wore to do the dishes. That would explain the lack of fingerprints, wouldn't it, Ranger?

PR: Yes, it would, Sir. That would explain it well enough. Tell me, Sir, did you help with the dishes back in Arkansas?

BC, *chuckling*: To tell the truth, Ranger, I've never been very good with figures and my evenings were pretty busy, even back then.

PR: Of course, Sir. I understand.

BC: Is that all, Ranger?

PR: Yes, it is. I believe so, Sir. *Looks back at his notebook.* Oh, yes, Mr. President. There is one little matter. The powder burns, Sir.

BC: Powder burns, Ranger?

PR: Yes, Sir. There were no powder burns on Mr. Foster's face or clothing. I just can't figure out how he did it, Sir. A man committing suicide usually puts the gun right up to his face or even inside his mouth. Sir, I'm having a problem imagining how he did it. *Holds his hand at full length away from his face and wags his thumb vigorously.* You don't usually hold the gun so far away that there are no powder burns. In fact, I don't know how you can do it.

BC: What are you suggesting, Park Ranger?

PR, *looking baffled*: Suggesting, Sir? I'm not suggesting anything, Sir. I am just having some problems figuring out exactly how he did it.

BC, *looking impatiently at some papers on his desk:* Is there anything else, Park Ranger?

PR: Oh no, Sir. I don't believe so, Sir. *Pages through his notebook as he speaks.* Oh yes, Mr. President, there is one more thing. The position of the gun, Sir. When Mr. Foster was found, Sir, the gun was in his hand with his fingers tightly wrapped around the grip. Normally the force of the explosion will knock the gun right out of a suicide's hand. It's all very puzzling, Sir.

BC: Really, Park Ranger, I would like to hear more of your interesting speculations, but I am expecting an important phone call from, er, Boris Yeltsin. I hope that you will excuse me.

PR: Why, of course, Mr. President. I'm just grateful you could spare me this much time. *Gets up and walks to the door. As he reaches the door, the President speaks to him and he turns around.*

BC: Before you leave, Park Ranger, I have a little question for you.

PR: For me, Sir?

BC: Yes. What did you say your first name was?

PR: Oh, Sir, nobody calls me that but my wife, Sir. Just call me Park Ranger Columbo.

BC: Park Ranger Columbo, you mentioned that you used to work for the LAPD. I didn't realize that they had a Parks Division.

PR: Oh no, Sir, they don't. I used to work in Homicide, Sir. I was a lieutenant in the Homicide Division. Well, I'll just leave you alone now, Mr. President. And thank you again for your time. *Exits stage right through the door by which he entered. When Columbo is gone, the President stares after him, and what he has heard begins to sink in. He presses the*

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buzzer on his desk.
BC: Get Hillary, Janet, and George in here on the double.
Voice from the intercom: Is there a problem, Mr. President?
BC: I have just been talking to a very depressed man. I have a horrible premonition that a valued member of the United States Parks Service is on the verge of suicide. *The President sits back pensively in his chair.*

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Perception and Truth

by Robert C. Whitten

The Tailhook Debacle

The September 1991 Tailhook scandal has done more damage to the United States Navy than Admiral Sergei Gorshkov and his Soviet fleet had ever hoped to do. Although military law appears to have been violated, the escapade itself was worse than criminal—it was stupid! In this day of radical feminism, the senior officers of the service at the very least should have been aware of the risks in "letting boys be boys." The charges began with one female lieutenant, Paula Coughlin, and escalated until the government claimed to have found 97 "victims of assault," including seven males. Following dissatisfaction with the Navy's careful and constitutional rights-respecting investigations, the Department of Defense Inspector General (DODIG) took over. Much of the Tailhook story revolves around the investigators' methods, the preliminary results of which are summarized in a government report entitled *Tailhook '91: Part 2: Events at the Annual Tailhook Symposium.*

Let it be clear at the outset that, for a government report, *Tailhook '91: Part 2* is an uncommonly readable, clear, and well-organized publication. Indeed, one wonders if the obviously considerable cost of producing such a physically and linguistically high-quality report is justified in this day of drastically declining defense expenditures. It is divided into 11 chapters and seven appendices. The "Part 2" refers to a revision and not a continuation of a previous report. The chapters describe the scope and methodology of the investigation and provide background on the "Tailhook Association," witnesses, Navy cooperation, squadron hospitality suites, assaults, "indecent exposure," and other improper activity as well as security and leadership issues. On the face of it, the report appears exhaustive. But does it provide an accurate picture of what really went on at Tailhook '91? The answer seems to be both "yes" and "no." In other words, it appears to tell *a considerable amount* of truth but not the *whole truth that was in the possession of the investigators.* Moreover, parts of it are misleading. The writing is also marred by confusion on the part of the authors concerning rank structure in the Navy. The authors repeatedly refer to "field officers," presumably meaning "command rank," since the designation appears to refer to (Navy) captains and commanders. Command rank is not completely comparable to field rank in the other services. Moreover, students at the U.S. Naval Academy are *midshipmen*, not *cadets.*

The culture of naval aviation is quite different from the cultures of surface sailors and submariners. Aviators, primarily carrier aviators, have been a pampered lot almost from the beginning of fleet aviation. As far back as 1928, when the old U.S.S. *Saratoga* (CV 3) was in overhaul at Bremerton, Washington, a group of officers threw a party ending in such debauchery with local debutantes that the latters' fathers complained to the CO, Captain (later Fleet Admiral) E.J. King. King refused to do anything about it. One of the aviators of those years, Frank Tinker, who later flew for both the Loyalists and Franco during the Spanish Civil War, was such a hellraiser that even the Navy could not put up with his antics and threw him out. Flight operations on a carrier are, of course, much trickier than on land. The heaving deck, especially at night, makes landing a literal nightmare. These difficulties and dangers have been cited as a partial (but far from satisfactory) explanation for the lack of discipline among naval aviators when ashore. A faint odor of the antics of the carrier aviators comes through in the Officers' Club scenes in the movie *Top Gun.*

The Tailhook Association was launched about 1962 as a combination professional society and social club for carrier aviators. The professional aspect of the association grew over the years. But so did the rowdiness. Destruction of hotel property at one symposium even led to the expulsion of the association from Mexico (Rosarita Beach). In recent years, at least one flag aviator, Vice Admiral James Service, reportedly tried, if unsuccessfully, to tone down the rowdiness. The symposium at the Las Vegas Hilton in September 1991 featured some 31 regular Navy flag officers, three reserve flag officers, and one Marine general officer in addition to representatives of aircraft and weapons companies like McDonnell Douglas. According to the program published in *Tailhook '91*, the symposium was as professionally solid as one in any engineering society—in the daytime. Nights were a different story.

The "whistleblowing" on Tailhook '91 began with the charge from helicopter pilot Lieutenant Paula Coughlin, a participant in at least one previous "Tailhook," that she had been assaulted in the "gauntlet" area on the third floor. With coaching from the Department of Defense Inspector General (DODIG) staff, she eventually identified Captain Gregory Bonam, USMC, as her assailant. The gauntlet was a corridor area on the third floor where women were allegedly grabbed, pinched, or fondled on the breasts and crotch as they passed through. In fact, some claimed to have been bodily raised into the air and carried some distance. Most of this activity appears to have been consensual, although some was not. Lieutenant Coughlin's complaint, first reported in the press by a young reporter for the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, Greg Vistica, found its way to sympathetic hands in one of the offices of the Secretary of Defense. When Coughlin (on the basis of a photograph) "identified" her assailant, it quickly became apparent to her DOD backers that she had erred. They warned her of the error, despite the inadmissibility of such action. In a second attempt, she fixed on Bonam, and he was charged.

According to then-Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) Barbara Pope, at least one flag officer, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Air Warfare) Vice Admiral Richard-Dunleavy, may have had knowledge of the "gauntlet." According to

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one story, Dunleavy received a copy of the Coughlin complaint and simply filed it; according to another, he bucked it up to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Stanley Arthur. Whatever the truth, Ms. Pope went into hysterics when the Judge Advocate General (JAG) of the Navy informed her that the investigations would have to proceed in accordance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and all constitutional rights. Failure to provide such protections would likely mean failure by courts-martial to convict or reversal of any convictions on appeal. The year 1992, however, was an election year, and Ms. Pope's threatened resignation if the investigations were not vigorously pressed appears to have concentrated the collective mind of the civilian chiefs of the defense establishment on short-circuiting the established procedures. In the words of the then-commander of the Naval Investigative Service, "Perceptions were [considered to be] more important than the truth or the protection of individual rights."

The Judge Advocate General (JAG), Rear Admiral John E. Gordon, had similar experiences with the DODIG investigators. It is interesting to note that while Admiral Gordon retired on schedule in November 1992, the Acting Secretary of the Navy, Sean O'Keefe, implied in a speech that he had been fired. The dissembling of the civilian DOD leadership and investigative service was on a par with or perhaps even worse than that of the male and female attendees at Tailhook '91. The sole civilian leader who came out untarnished was the Secretary of the Navy at the time of Tailhook, Lawrence Garrett, who resigned in June 1992 rather than participate in injustice.

In order to build a case, the DODIG investigators had to interview as many of the attendees as they could find. The women who had been "assaulted" were the obvious prime candidates. Ms. Beth Rudd of San Diego was one of the civilian "victims." In a lengthy letter to the President, the service chiefs, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Representative Patricia Schroeder, she vociferously *denied* being assaulted or observing the kinds of behavior that were the subject of the investigation. Yet she was classed as a victim! The investigators even went so far as to pursue one of the civilian women, a Canadian citizen, into Canada. They came away empty-handed, since she did not consider herself a victim and declined to cooperate. Testimony under cross-examination (available from me upon request) of one of the investigators revealed in sharp relief the government's assault on logic in order to maximize the number of "victims." DODIG would decide who was a "victim," regardless of the "victim's" opinion, reminiscent of the mayor of Vienna's famous statement, "I will decide who is a Jew!" The following question by the defense counsel and reply by the government investigator aptly summarize the arrogance of the DODIG approach:

> Q: Why didn't you put in the statement that she didn't consider herself to be a victim?
> A: No answer for that either, other than the fact that basically it wasn't relevant for her to decide that, it wasn't relevant for me to decide that. That's why we're here and that's the way I viewed it at the time was, essentially, it's not up to men to make a determination whether or not someone else has been assaulted.

A young woman, a lieutenant and 1990 Naval Academy graduate, who lodged an assault complaint against Lieutenant Cole Cowden went by the nickname of "Bellyshot Beth." The term "bellyshot" refers to lapping up a drink from the navel of another party. On direct examination by the government counsel, she admitted to having had consensual sex with Cowden but continued to assert that she had been assaulted. The cross-examination went less well for her, however. She admitted that she had lied to the investigators about her quite enthusiastic participation in the Tailhook partying. When queried as to why she had brought charges that could not be supported, she replied that she simply wanted to protect herself and her family from scandal. She was at the time engaged to be married. Charges against Cowden were eventually dropped for lack of evidence. "Bellyshot Beth" was not charged with misleading the investigators or with perjury, and she has presumably resumed her *naval* career.

The DODIG was ultimately able to bring charges against two officers, Commander Gregory Tritt and Lieutenant Rolando "Ghandi" Diaz, the latter for disobeying orders by shaving a woman above an allowed spot on the thigh! The rest of the effort expended on Tailhook has been wasted. Indeed, it is far from certain that (barring command intervention) Tritt and Diaz will be convicted. Based on the testimony, the official report, and newspaper articles, one inescapable impression is of a giant witch-hunt at taxpayers' expense.

The investigations were eventually turned over to senior officers, Vice Admiral J. Paul Reason for the Navy and Lieutenant General Charles Krulak for the Marine Corps. Krulak, a hero of the Persian Gulf War, rapidly cleared his desk, recommending that no charges be brought. Reason has not been so expeditious. He insisted on several occasions that even if insufficient evidence for conviction existed, nonappealable letters of censure should be issued. While several such letters were issued, others were rejected by Admiral Arthur, some after more than one submission. Reason is persistent. The current Secretary of the Navy, John Dalton, has handled the flag officers himself. At one point he told the press that he was spending half his time on "Tailhook," as if that were the most important defense issue facing the nation. The career of Rear Admiral Riley Mixson, a promising naval aviator and, at the time of Tailhook, Dunleavy's assistant, seems to have been destroyed merely because he was Dunleavy's assistant and because he attended the Tailhook proceedings. Standing in the background of all these proceedings was the *éminence grise* of the House Armed Services Committee, Congresswoman Pat Schroeder; though she publicly said almost nothing about Tailhook, the principals all felt her presence. Such establishment of "guilt by association" is reminiscent of the days of Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Several conclusions may be drawn from the Tailhook incident. A long-standing breakdown in top-level leadership in the naval aviation community was a major contributing factor to the unseemly activities. Indeed, I have seen at close range the inability or unwillingness of aviation admirals to control their junior officers. With very few exceptions, the flag officers seem to have implicitly encouraged the attitude that "boys will be boys." The "sexual revolution" of the 1960's and the general permissiveness that now dominates American society also contributed to Tailhook. Even an authoritative system like the

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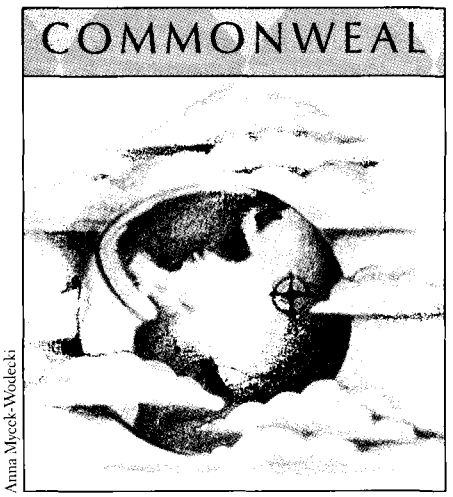
Navy is not immune to outside social mores; as an old cliché states, an armed service is a reflection of the society in which it is embedded. Finally, all sense of justice seems to have been lost on the part of the DOD civilian leadership. Those who knew better were concerned with protecting their own personal interests while inquisitors ran amok.

It is sad but true that the entire Tailhook incident is a reflection of the general decay of American society. Lying, cheating, and "witch-hunting"—all have become acceptable, especially if they are done for a "good cause."

Robert C. Whitten is a commander, U.S. Naval Reserve-Retired, a national director of the Navy League of the United States, and a retired research scientist for NASA.



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The Crusade to Nowhere

by George Watson

Remembering E.P. Thompson

My last conversation with Edward Thompson, the Marxist historian, was at the gates of Durham Castle. That, on reflection, was how it should have been. There was always something slightly grand about him, as if a castle, or at least a country mansion, might be a natural place for him. Durham Castle is now a college, and there had been a conference there, so we found ourselves breakfasting together in its great hall. Thompson's consternation at seeing me is not to be forgotten. He greeted me with a grunt and opened a newspaper to block off the view; and when I found him half an hour later outside the castle with his luggage, he looked even more beleaguered. "I'm just waiting to be picked up," he said in embarrassment. Imagining he meant that his wife was about to drive him home, I waved goodbye and walked to the station, bag in hand. A few minutes later he appeared on the platform, looked at me in a persecuted way, and rushed to the counter to buy another newspaper to hide behind. He had taken a taxi.

But then it was not in his nature to travel light or in less than due style, and his socialism was gentlemanly. That was his distinction. His aspirations were not middle-class, like those of his friend and rival Raymond Williams, but touched with grandeur, and his country home in Worcestershire is rumored to have embraced a deer-park. My Cambridge colleague Williams, who died five years before Thompson and whose values (by contrast) were those of a middle-class family man, often spoke with amusement of Thompson's love of the high life, and his success with women was remarkable. No wonder the word "charisma" figured large in his obituaries. He was to the British left what Evelyn Waugh, a generation earlier, had been to the right: an aberrant symbol in tweeds and country boots who profoundly regretted that he had not inherited a title and a family seat.

His parents, who had been Methodist missionaries in India, were radical. His older brother Frank was executed by the Nazis in Bulgaria while working for Special Operations, fresh from Winchester and Oxford; he died at 21, full of the promise of youth. Edward and his mother edited Frank's literary remains as *There is a Spirit in Europe* (1947), the spirit being a high-minded Stalinism that inspired Edward, a communist by conviction from the age of 16, to join the British Communist Party and to work on a railway in Yugoslavia before Tito's break with Stalin. Three years after Stalin's death in 1953, Edward broke with the party over its support of the Soviet invasion of Hungary and with John Saville started *The Reasoner*, a journal that, after more than one change of name, became the *New Left Review*. In 1957 he became a founder-member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

His academic career was little more than transient, his six years as Reader in Social History at the new university in Warwick ending without a chair; he was never one to be comfortable with second place, or with silent withdrawal. In fact, his resignation was made in noisy protest, and in *Warwick University Ltd.* (1970) he publicly accused this academic establishment of venality in fostering connections with big business. The routine of teaching, in any case, meant nothing to him, and for the last 20 years of his life and more he lived by choice the life of an itinerant sage—a sort of British Jean-Paul Sartre—organizing round-table conferences for the *Maison des Sciences de l'Homme* in Paris and, in the 1980's, playing a starring role in European Nuclear Disarmament (END).

The books, meanwhile, poured forth, and by the 1980's, according to the Arts and Humanities Citations Index, he was the most quoted 20th-century historian on earth. He began with a study of William Morris in 1955, achieved a climax with *The Making of the English Working Class* in 1963, and entered the world of active affairs with the *New Left May Day Manifesto* in 1967, of which he was coeditor. These were all manifestly works of polemical intent. The historian showed through more clearly in *Whigs and Hunters* (1975), on the 1723 game acts against poaching. But detachment did not interest him, and three years later his most controversial book appeared, *The Poverty of Theory* (1978), a collection of papers in which he chided the Polish exile Leszek Kolakowski for his apostasy from Marxism and Louis Althusser, the Parisian philosopher, and for an excess of intellectual rigor and aridity: he aspired toward a middle way in which humanity and socialism might some day be reconciled. The stream of articles and pamphlets, meanwhile, was unending, and before his long last illness he completed a study of William Blake, published posthumously as *Witness Against the Beast* (1993).

By then he had supplanted Bertrand Russell, who died in 1970, at what might be called the Rolls Royce end of the British left; and with his sunburnt looks and aureole of greying curls, delighting above all in the adoration of the young,

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he was an essential figure on CND platforms and at international conferences devoted to the intellectual redefinition of the left in an age of fading hope. His coevals, it is true, could find him self-important and sulky, and not only at the breakfast table, and he was never honored as Russell was, though a year before his death he became a Fellow of the British Academy. But by then he was a puzzled sage, at once passionate and ambiguous, dedicated and yet plagued by doubts, and a popular idol needs above all things to look and sound certain.

The uncertainties, so far as one can chart them from public documents, began with his departure from the Communist Party in 1956. Years later he was to begin the foreword to *The Poverty of Theory* with the ominous words: "I commenced to reason in my 33rd year, and despite my best efforts I have never been able to shake the habit off." The remark is ambiguous in multiple ways, even if you allow that "despite my best efforts" is ironic. But even that is unclear. Thompson did try at times not to reason, fearful of where reason might take him. The general tenor of the remark, too, is unclear. It sounds like self-recommendation. So does the rest of the book, and in Thompson's writings the first person is never far away. But why, one is left wondering, would a man of privileged upbringing and education—Kingswood and Cambridge—wait till he was nearly 33 before thinking for himself?

The answer is not to be spoken lightly, but it must be attempted. Thompson, for all his dissidence, loved to belong to things. He joined the Communist Party, following his brother Frank; the journals he helped to found and edit were group journals; the Round Table and END were international groups. Though never a man of the majority, he was never a loner either; and commencing to reason, which started when his life was nearly half done, meant not walking a lonely road of intellection but promoting oneself from disciple to leader. Though he loved to think of himself as awkward, in the tradition of Blake, Cobbett, Morris, and F.R. Leavis, it was always the sort of awkwardness that sought admiration; the public figure who is indifferent to approbation has never been born. "One must put oneself into a school of awkwardness," he once wrote, and "make one's sensibility all knobbly—all knees and elbows of susceptibility and refusal." That is one way of commanding attention, certainly, and attention was what he could not be without. The nonconformist tradition in which he was brought up did not die when it rejected God. And, like many another nonconformist, he could not live in another's shadow.

Since a leader cannot bear competition, the leadership of the New Left, in its day, was not harmonious, and it could lay about its friends as well as its adversaries. Thompson could be devastating. His review of Raymond Williams's *The Long Revolution* in *New Left Review* (May-June 1961) is a case in point: the book, he wrote, reads as if it were written by "an elderly gentlewoman and near-relative of Mr. Eliot, so distinguished as to have become an institution"—an institution, Thompson goes on happily, called The Tradition: "There she sits, with that white starched affair on her head, knitting definitions" and decorous beyond belief. "In her presence how one must watch one's *language*!" As a demolition-job that shows some skill, and though Thompson's prose was too disjointed to make him an eminent stylist, his invective, at times, had pungency and bite.

His style, like Marx's own, oscillated between the stolidly academic and the virulently witty; and as with Marx, it is the witty virulence that is interesting. In *The Making of the English Working Class* his ancestral Methodism is soundly and repeatedly vilified, and though the rhetoric is extreme it saves the book from the charge of stolidity. Methodism, in his view, did not just inhibit social revolution by its promise of felicity in an after-life. Darker and more nebulous charges are made against it. It was a form of psychic masturbation. It encouraged hysteria, like the false pregnancy of Joanna Southcott, the religious enthusiast, in 1814. It is such bizarre detail, such grotesque incidents and the passion of vilification they arouse in him, that keep the book readable.

His theoretical exercises were less happy. The epistemology of Louis Althusser, who later became famous by strangling his wife, cannot easily be made a lively topic, but the reader hardly deserves to be told that it was "founded upon an account of theoretical procedures which is at every point derivative not only from academic intellectual disciplines but from one (and at the most three) highly specialized disciplines," meaning his philosophy, which was "a particular Cartesian tradition of logical exegesis marked at its origins by the pressures of Catholic theology modified by the monism of Spinoza." That is bedsit-Trotskyite English, and there were moments when it came too easily to him. It suggests not only a disregard of the reader but a despair about politics; the despair of one for whom the revolution never came.

Thompson's crusade led nowhere. Behind his prose, however, lay a rich interior life—not just of the country gentleman in his boots, or of the cult historian, but of the tousled hero adored by the crowd. In that mood he was defiant, and his defiance was heroic. "I will not be silenced by mere opposition," he wrote to Kolakowski in his "Open Letter," no doubt to the latter's profound astonishment. Imagine expecting any such thing. Thompson may have preferred silence at breakfast, but his true inclinations were all for arguing out and arguing down: "The great bustard, by a law well-known to aeronautics, can only rise into the air against a strong head-wind. It is only by facing into opposition that I am able to define my thought at all." One imagines a polite and erudite Polish dissident, brought up in the grey tedium of postwar Poland where debates about Marxism-Leninism were about as exciting as the liturgies of an established church, feeling puzzled by all this vivid self-agitation. Of course no one was trying to silence Thompson. It was merely important to him to imagine that many were.

But then behind the bravado there lay self-doubt. After all, there was plenty to be doubtful about. Thompson had served Stalin faithfully down to his death in 1953 and for several years more. He commenced to reason, as he put it, only after Khrushchev had shown the green light to anti-Stalinism in his speech to the 20th Party Congress in 1956, which suggests that he still needed a leader to show the way. He had believed in the nostrums of the left in its heyday, one by one, and one by one he saw them falter and fail, and he wondered how he had ever believed them: that you defeat capitalism by making the state the supreme capitalist; that to abolish grammar schools is to move toward greater equality of education; that a nuclear arms race can only beggar the West and lead to nuclear war. "The whole grotesque car-

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nival of annihilation is still on the road," he shouted to a CND rally at Hyde Park, London in October 1981. "Time is not on our side." In fact it was. The West was not beggared by the arms race, and the world did not explode. It was the socialist empire that died, and with it the fading hopes of those who believed that its theory of mankind was at once inevitable and just.

Meanwhile, the work of definition and redefinition continued, buoyed up by an invincible sense of virtue and righteousness; but even the polemics now look dated. The struggle to humanize socialism by anglicizing it—less Marx and more Morris—was honorably patriotic, but its terms were confused. "Marx did not invent the socialist movement," he wrote in *The Poverty of Theory*, and Morris had more to say than he about the humane objectives of socialism; but he then quotes a letter of Morris consisting entirely of unstinted praise of Marx. If there was ever an English, pre-Marxist phase of socialism, Morris does not seem to know about it; nor does *The Making of the English Working Class*, which is about radical movements before the great Reform Act of 1832, demonstrate that a socialist tradition flourished in England before that year.

Thompson gravely overrated, too, the attention that Marxists pay to the writings of Marx. "To return . . . to propositions of Marx is like going on a cross-country run in leaden boots," he remarks at the end of *The Poverty of Theory*, complaining that Althusser and his kind were prisoners of texts, capable of doing no more than reading and quoting the writings of Marx. If only they had read them at all. In 1992 Althusser's posthumous autobiography appeared, *L'Avenir dure longtemps*, revealing that the French philosopher had read *none* of the writings of Aristotle and Kant, on whom he lectured, and only the early writings of Marx. Thompson had supposed that the French Marxist habit of quoting Marx meant that they were studious, even book-bound. In fact they were lazy and borrowed quotations. The author of *Lire le Capital* (1968), on his own admission, had not read it.

The Poverty of Theory is a tortured and shadowed work, oddly compounded of heroics and self-reproach. It ends with a passage that brought tears to the eyes of some when it first appeared, and it is still a passage to haunt the mind: "What if the defeat be total and abject, and call in question the rationality and good faith of the socialist project itself?" What indeed? That was written long ago, in the 1970's, and about events even longer ago, such as the Soviet action in Budapest in 1956. But it is also, in a strange and perhaps unintended way, predictive. In 1989 the Soviet defeat *was* total and abject, after all, and it did call into question far more than the rationality and good faith of the Soviet system.

Thompson's writings were composed too early to tell us what he thought about all that. *The Poverty of Theory* ends evocatively with an echo of the famous last sentence of Voltaire's *Candide*, where an innocent returns to the home of his youth after a wealth of conflicting experiences and sees its familiar sights as if for the first time. The world, though itself unchanged, looks different, and what is different is oneself. Thompson concludes his book by announcing that he will now return to "my proper work," whatever that was, "and to my own garden," as if the universe of politics that had once looked simple had grown too complex for him to understand. "I will watch how things grow." Like the endeavors of his parents to Christianize India, his crusade had led nowhere. But he was right to think that it is by watching and learning, when theory fails, that innocents at last become wise.

George Watson, who is a fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, is the author of Politics & Literature in Modern Britain, The Idea of Liberalism, *and* British Literature Since 1945.

LIBERAL ARTS

KILLJOY LAW

The Socialist Party in Greece recently divided over the critical problem of what to do about late-night parties. The government, which had attempted to get Greeks to go to bed earlier by banning drink and dance after 2 A.M. in clubs, bars, and discos, was split between ministers who publicly argue that the killjoy law is needed to crack down on an alarming rise in crime, alcoholism, and drug addiction among the young and officials who privately concede that it has done more to cramp their own lifestyle than any other law.

According to the *European* last March, many prominent Socialist MPs and ministers were "praying" that Stelios Papathemelis, Greece's church-going public order minister, would be forced to withdraw the antirevelling legislation. "The sight of riot police clubbing hundreds of revellers, many armed with little more than a drink, as they demonstrated outside an Athenian bar, has sent shivers down the spines of fun-loving Socialists." But Papathemelis thinks "it's about time that Greeks learned to behave like other Europeans. They go to bed at illogical hours and then, exhausted, sleep through the day at work or school."

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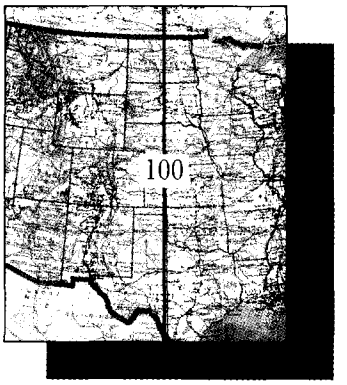
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The Violent West



The matador who received top billing was not, as advertised, the most famous bullfighter in Spain but rather (we guessed) his son, or perhaps his nephew or second cousin; also, the promised dinner with this matador, to have been arranged by a (self-identified) associate of the Plaza Monumental in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, the evening before the fight failed to materialize. Nevertheless, the afternoon of April 3, 1994—Easter Sunday—witnessed some of the best bullfighting Jim Rauen and I had seen in four seasons, climaxed by a superb performance by an improbably small *torero*, hardly bigger than a dwarf, named Adrian Flores, previously unknown to us but with a fighting style comparable to that of the late Juan Belmonte. Flores was particularly brilliant with his first bull, which he passed so close to his body that his scarlet-and-white suit was repeatedly smeared with blood, and placed the *estocada* with precision high between the shoulders so that the bull collapsed in seconds: *el presidente* held out one handkerchief at the conclusion, then a second in response to the frenzied admonition of the crowd, and Flores' men cut two ears. At the start of his second fight, Flores in a departure from custom had the ring cleared and then, taking a position before the gate marked TORILES, knelt on both knees with his pink-and-yellow cape spread in the sand before him and awaited the charging bull, which he passed with aplomb on his right side while the crowd screamed and huzzaed. "I wouldn't want to be that guy's insurer," Jim said. "He could just as easily have taken a horn in the chest."

A very large billboard, planted in the New Mexican desert along Interstate 25 between Albuquerque and El Paso and much admired by Jim and me for the past couple of years, reads "NEVER HURT A CHILD. NEVER NEVER NEVER" in stark black letters on a white background. Or a woman. Or a serial killer. Or a bull. So what if the child deserves a whipping, your wife has betrayed you with your worst enemy, the killer is itching to bloody his knife again, and a fighting bull likes nothing better than a fight to the death? NEVER NEVER NEVER. It is the voice of the American enlightenment, crying out in what alas is no longer a wilderness against postcivilized man's worst embarrassment, greatest horror, and ultimate scandal: violence. For at least three decades now, violence has been the highest reproach flung in the faces of the American people by their severest critics both at home and abroad. America, its citizens are lectured *ad nauseam*, has the most violent record in the history of great nations, a tale of bloodshed, mayhem, and destruction perpetuated in the present time by the Second Amendment and the survival of a bloody nationalist mythology, much of it the product of the imperialist enterprise that was once identified in children's school books as the Winning of the West and has lately been opposed by a counter-mythology whose essential weakness is that it is incomplete, being neither radical enough nor all-encompassing.

Cormac McCarthy's novel *Blood Meridian* probably gives the grimmest picture of the American West ever written, yet it is no indictment of but rather a dark paean to the region, its human history, and its metaphysical heart. McCarthy takes no sides and indulges no favorites: all his characters—Anglo, Mexican, and Indian—are not merely agents but angels of violence, adjunct and expression of a land itself violent and pitiless, over which the spirit of violent death incessantly broods. What preserves *Blood Meridian* from nihilism is the profound naturalness of even its most horrific action, the postulation of violence as an aspect of metaphysical truth. Violence in *Blood Meridian* may not be cleansing but, despite its bizarre terrors, it *is* clean: clean as the sharply eroded landforms, the rock piles, and the crystalline air that form the setting of the novel.

The secret behind the heartbreaking, ineffable beauty of the Western landscape is death, its most obvious symbols being the limitless vistas of light and shadow and the circling turkey buzzard into whose black greasy form, surmounted by the fleshy red head, Edward Abbey professed to hope his soul might transmigrate. As Cactus Ed never failed to insist, the West—the desert West especially—is no place for the timid and the squeamish. Terrible things easily befall man or woman in a country that appears to have been designed for a race of giants and heroes, not for puny human beings: here sheer precipices more than half a mile in height yawn suddenly under one's feet, blizzards arise in minutes from which the unprepared never emerge, violent electrical storms break from a cloud that an hour earlier was no larger than a walnut, deceptive distances call the unwary to deposit their bones for discovery a quarter-century hence, or never. Flash floods, forest fires, hailstorms; disorientation, hypothermia, heatstroke; snakebite, bear attack, avalanche. Almost the only danger to have been eliminated from those parts since the last century is the Indians, who are nowadays a menace mostly to themselves.

The Navajo reservation whose eastern end, lapsing over the northeastern Arizona border into northwestern New Mexico, lies athwart my route of travel between Kemmerer and Juárez offers, as do most of the Western Indian impoundments, a depressing example of a culture in which honest violence has been replaced by something much worse. The Navajo, like their cousins the Apache, are an Athabascan people who drifted down to the Southwest from Alaska between 600 and 800 years ago; by the time Kit Carson arrived with an American army in the 1860's to subdue them, their reputation for fierceness was so great among the neighboring tribes that warriors belonging to the Utes and Pueblos eagerly joined the campaign. Navajo regularly engaged in casual kills

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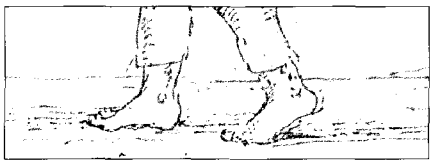
for the purpose of augmenting their own flocks with a few of somebody else's sheep or goats, yet even they were not killing machines like the Apache and Comanche (who invented practices like drilling holes in the tops of the heads of their enemies and cooking them slowly upside-down over open fires until their brains bubbled out as an effective means of dealing with their aboriginal cousins and, only later, with the white men). While there are exceptions to the rule—notably the Papago and other Piman tribes, who were peaceable agriculturalists—a major cause of the degradation and despair endemic to most Indian reservations in the West today is the deprivation of these immediate descendants of warrior cultures of a principal traditional activity—namely killing—for which they have failed to discover a profitable and pleasurable substitute. Forcibly advanced from primitivism to decadence in a few generations by the conquering civilization, they have been tempted to redirect violence against outsiders inward, against themselves, by alcoholism, drug addiction, murder, and—increasingly—by suicide. Five years ago, while skulking among the Navajo, I met a 16-year-old boy who was eager to show me Avon Lady, an ancient crone who spent the hottest part of the June day at the Tuba City dump, wrapped in heavy blankets while she sat in a folding chair sniffing discarded nail-polish bottles. The boy had recently returned from a week in the desert where he tended his grandmother's sheep; as we stood on the rim of White Mesa watching a pillar of dust rise from the desert floor a mile or more into the hot blue sky, he asked me what I thought of "the res." When I told him I thought it was very beautiful, he shook his head. "I think it's boring." He expected to spend the rest of the summer branding cows, but what he wanted to do was go to Phoenix. "I'm the only man in my family not to be an alcoholic, yet," he remarked with pride.

Perhaps, after all, there is something to be said for the claim made by the Mexicans and the Indians that the Southwest remains spiritually their country. Certainly the bland and busy Anglo culture that the Americans have imposed upon the region is a skin-deep artificiality, vulnerable not only to the ever-present (and ever-deepening) water crisis but to historical processes and to the nature of the land itself. No more than a glance at the burnt-out cones and crags of southern Arizona is needed for the sympathetic viewer to understand that bull rings, not golf courses, are appropriate here. Yet when, a year ago, an article of mine in praise of the bullfight appeared in the *Arizona Republic*, the response from readers was outraged and prolonged: only, it seemed, the Mexican consul in Phoenix, who had recently been incensed by my remarks in another context regarding constitutional rights in Mexico, failed to protest.

The traditional Spanish *corrida* is rich



in meaning, of which the most significant is this: that death is not the worst thing we find in life. And since this profoundly moving ritual is substantially the historical product of a great Catholic culture, it should not be surprising that the bullfight and traditional Catholic piety have a shared understanding of the nature of violence and of its place in a fallen world. That understanding, of course, is the polar opposite of the modern American public's loathing, based almost entirely upon sentiment, of violence in all its manifestations, from bullfighting and duck hunting to capital punishment and the use of firearms even in self-defense. If it is true, as it probably is, that the West has been perceived as the national epicenter of violent behavior throughout the history of the American Republic, then the meaning of violence is just one more lesson that Western civilization has to teach the effete, denatured subjects in other parts of the country: an object for contemplation of far greater importance than the geysers of the Yellowstone. All the national keening and handwringing to the contrary, what the United States needs today is more violence, not less of it, and a commensurate willingness to examine violence unshrinkingly in order to learn its place in the life of man and its role in the history of mankind (as, for example, of the ancient Greeks and the early Church). Two days ago as I write, a 10-year-old boy in Butte, Montana, angered by an argument with another student the day before, aimed a .22-caliber semi-automatic pistol on the playground and fired, killing the child standing next to the intended target. Naturally the response to the shooting involved the usual hysteria—"Butte has joined the world"—and batteries of psychologists have been dispatched to assist and comfort the walking emotionally wounded. But terrible as the incident was, there is surely nothing untoward in a child's being confronted by the reality of violent death, a routine-enough occurrence before the arrival of the sheltering and sentimentalist modern era. Today, in addition to death, children must face the ordeal of fortress-footed female psychiatrists bearing down in the aftermath of terror, armed with notebooks stuffed with government documents, to torment them in their grief and in the pain of their budding knowledge of the world. Even if American adults cannot grow up, that is no reason why their children shouldn't.

The grandeur of the bullfight is the expression of its central task of submitting violence and death to the forces of control, which is also the meaning of so-called sport hunting and of premodern warfare. Compare these activities with such postmodern forms of violence as gang war and the urban mugging, which are by contrast uncontrolled, vicious, and without recourse to elementary human awareness. Is it possible that a society in which children are exposed from birth to the killing of wild animals, the butchering of domestic ones, and occasional armed skirmishes between tribal enemies is incapable of the violent anarchy that recently reached its apparent climax at the Robert Taylor public housing development in Chicago? History has no record of the Pueblo Indians in their cliffside apartments behaving like that.

For reasons ranging from the metaphysical to the political, Americans today have an interest in contemplating, cultivating, and practicing the reality of violence—the right sort of violence; not in shutting their eyes and turning their backs on it, or deploring its continued existence as an anachronism that a "civilized" people ought to have outgrown. The prophets of old are hardly paid attention anymore, yet of their prophecies the one that may well rise up soonest to confound contemporary Americans in their staggering ignorance and naiveté is this from St. Matthew (11:12): "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away."

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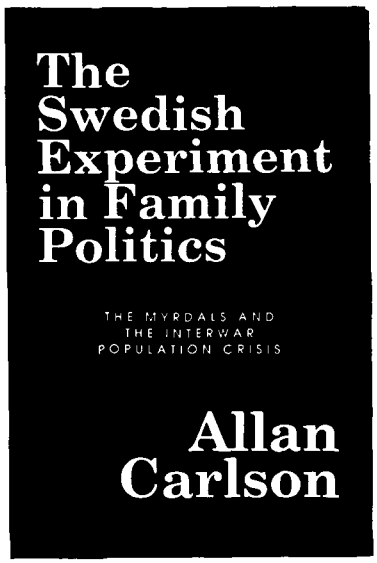

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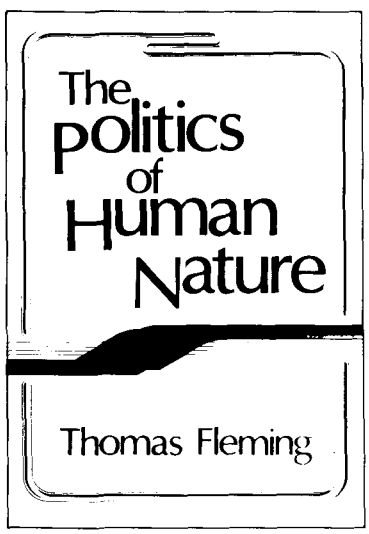

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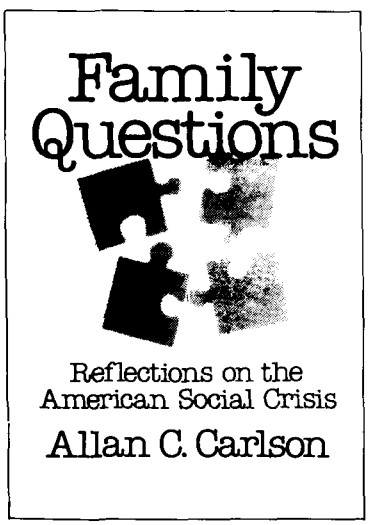

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